

Charlotte Seycester
the gift of her Mother Sept. 1787







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THE
R E C E S S ;

OR, A
TALE OF OTHER TIMES.

BY THE AUTHOR
OF THE
CHAPTER OF ACCIDENTS.

THE THIRD EDITION, CORRECTED.

“ Are not these Woods
“ More free from peril than the envious Court ?
“ Here feel we but the penalty of Adam,
“ The seasons’ difference.”

V O L. III.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. CADELL, in the Strand,

M.DCC.LXXXVII.

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R E C E S S, &c.

WHEN the sick languor of the faintings gave place to reflection, I found myself in my own bed; whither I understood I had been conveyed by the orders of Lord Arlington, as soon as my wound was staunch'd: his proved so slight that it left him no pretence for apprehension. Eagerly I enquired for Lady Pembroke, when to my inexpressible rage and astonishment I was informed, that she had been turned from my door, whither friendship had led her to venture a

VOL. III. B repulse.

repulse. The immaculate character of that admirable woman I thought even Lord Arlington would have respected; but without deigning to inform himself of the real circumstances of the unforeseen interview he had so dreadfully interrupted, he by this rude implication treated two of the most estimable and distinguished persons in the kingdom as abettors, if not contrivers of his dishonour.—The little blood left in my veins turned to gall at the idea. I watched an opportunity to tear away the bandages; and disdainfully resigning myself to a premature fate, endeavoured to forget the generous hearts this rash action would pierce.—The awful God, whose justice I thus questioned, still extended to me his mercy—my dangerous situation was discovered in time by my careful attendants, who, infinitely more attached to me than to their Lord, used every means to prolong the life he, perhaps, wished at its period.

In the cruel state of mind which dictated this desperate resolution, it proved
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a melancholy advantage; as the injury now fell on my constitution only, and my intellects escaped. It was many months ere I had strength to cross a room, or spirits to venture a question—during this memorable interval I called together every enfeebled power, and placing my conscience as umpire between myself and Lord Arlington, fixed and ascertained the rights of either. Convicted even by my own heart of imprudence, I wondered not that he construed error into guilt; and while thus cool offered him every vindication of my innocence he could reasonably desire: but Lord Arlington was the slave of passion and caprice, and not having firmness of soul to form, or fix, a judgment, he followed through years with invincible obstinacy the impression of the first moment.—From this period he ever treated me as an artful woman, whose licentious conduct had obliged him to risque his life in vain defence of that honor already sullied, and lost in my

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person;

person; nor did he affect to assert his legal rights from any other reason than to separate me from Essex. This conduct, and the misrepresentations of Lady Essex, blazed the fatal incident throughout the Court, and fixed a stain on my character time could never erase—happily that stain reached not my person or my heart, and an injustice so aggravating on the part of Lord Arlington entitled me to forgive the little error in myself which occasioned it.

In this conjuncture I once more turned my tearful eyes every way around in search of a protector to interfere between me and a fate alike unmerited and severe.—Alas! there was not a human being virtue allowed me to call to my aid; and I exercised the faculties heaven had so unexpectedly blessed me with, by resolving to suffer with patience.

Elizabeth Vernon (our old companion), the fair and gentle cousin of Lord Essex, resolved if possible to see me—she addressed

dressed Lord Arlington, and demanded that privilege; the favour she held with the Queen prevented his denying a request he granted with the utmost reluctance. That sweet girl bathed me in the tears of innocence and affection—she told me, “that the fear lest his presence should incense Lord Arlington to further brutality, had induced Essex, when I lost my senses, to withdraw from a scene which rent his very heart—and the same reason still obliged him to remain at a distance.—That during the long and dire uncertainty attending my illness, he had scarcely breathed—his own soul continually told him how pure mine was. Fancy presented me to him for ever, pale, speechless, expiring; my sad eyes rivetted on his with a tenderness death itself could not extinguish: however guiltless of my blood, every drop which oozed from my veins seemed to congeal on his heart; in fine, that almost deified by my sufferings, and his sense of them, I reigned alone in his affections, which were from this moment

consecrated to me by a most convincing proof. Having used the utmost art and diligence to discover how Lord Arlington so soon became apprised of his secret return to England, and a meeting so unplanned, and sudden, as to interrupt it almost immediately, though supposed to be as far off as Greenwich, Lord Effex learnt that his Master of the Horse, being among the domestics he brought with him to Pembroke House, had quitted it as soon as he alighted, and hastened to Greenwich in search of a girl attending on Lady Effex, of whom he was enamored; through whose means her Lady became likewise immediately acquainted with his secret arrival without knowing its motive. That suspicious woman had already remarked that Lord Arlington was among the bridal train, and in his hearing published the return of her Lord, with all her own injurious surmises—ill fortune for once had given them the color of truth, and Lord Arlington needed no more than the hint to make him mount the swiftest horse and

fly to satisfy himself.—Lady Effex was quickly informed of an incident she ought to have foreseen, and giving way to another extravagance, passionately conjured every friend she met to follow, and prevent the conflict to which her Lord now stood exposed—but when could friendship keep pace with love and vengeance? The straggling mediators arrived only time enough to witness the event no human power could guard against. Incensed beyond all bounds at the conduct of his Lady, the rash Effex took the only step wanting to my ruin. Determined to make her share the misery she had occasioned, he parted with her at once and for ever---in vain were all her subsequent vows of sorrow and repentance—in vain had she from that moment indulged hopes of his cooling and conciliating—his temper, till this fatal period, no less yielding than fiery, now assumed a cold and philosophic sternness; in fine, that the grief and disappointment to which Lady Effex resigned herself would severely punish her

unjust suspicions, and ere long release her Lord from the ill-judged bondage he had hitherto groaned so impatiently under."

The fair Elizabeth thus ended her recital, which was so clear, concise, and affecting, that I could not avoid taxing her with being the emissary of her cousin; her blushes acquitted her, and bespoke a secret time soon explained. She was secretly beloved by the gallant Southampton, that heroic friend who was only less attached to Essex than myself, and from him had learnt the various particulars public report could not apprise her of.—I held myself infinitely indebted to her friendship, and through her means sent that farewell to Lady Pembroke I was not allowed to pronounce.

It had been but too obvious through her whole recital, that I was totally the victim of calumny, nor could any human power now justify me.—I had been found in the arms of Essex---the fact was indubitable, the true cause of that fatal impulse not likely to be credited, even when repeated.

peated. My youth, my wound, and my past conduct, blended the rash judgment of the many with compassion, but the most liberal-minded ventured not to acquit me. Those impassioned vindications the conscious soul of Effex offered, were always considered as a mere point of honor in him, and no less necessary to his own justification than mine; they therefore only served to stamp guilt on both—Oh, misjudging world, how severely on the most superficial observation dost thou venture to decide!--let the barbed arrow of misfortune rest in the bosom it has wounded, nor, by inhumanly tearing it out to discover whence it came, rack the heart already broken.

Defamed, dejected, and forgotten by all but the generous sisters of the Sydney family, I followed, once more, my fate in Lord Arlington; and reached again that Abbey destined alike to entomb me in playful childhood, and in blasted youth—the same imperious will which had destroyed me, had deprived the venerable mansion of its sweet, its solitary charms—the

the hallowed spot where once the ivied trophies of time bound up the defaced ones of religion, presented nothing now but a bare and barren level; and the lofty woods, which so long protected alike the living and the dead, had wholly given place to infant plantations, through the thinness of which the weary eye every where pierced: I turned with disgust from the desolated scene, and locking myself up in the remotest and most gloomy chambers of the Abbey, spent my life in meditating on my every loss.

Lord Arlington now valuing me only as the appendage of his pride, consoled himself for my undissembled aversion, and cared not what employed me, provided I was yet his legal prisoner.—Alas, I had no longer resolution to rest my hopes on any object—to form any subordinate design, or to reap any subordinate pleasure. The poor children still supported by my bounty, no more touched the lute in my presence—that over which my own fingers once wandered with the wild elegance of untried youth,
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now useless and unstrung, hung up, an emblem of the discordant soul of its owner. Taste, genius, and science, those rich columns with which enthusiastic fancy erects in peaceful minds a thousand light aerial structures, deep sunk, and broken in my heart, presented to the mental eye a ruin more terrible than the noblest speculation ever paused over.—Misanthropy, black-visaged misanthropy, reigned there like a solitary savage, unconscious of the value of those treasures his rude hand every day more and more defaced.

I was roused one night with the information that a favourite servant of Lord Arlington's, who had long languished in a consumption, now found himself at the point of death, and importunately demanded to speak with me—but ill-disposed at this season even to the gentle offices of humanity, and convinced that he could have nothing to impart I should think of consequence, I rejected the request; but finding his Lord was inebriated beyond the power of comprehend-
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ing aught, on being again solicited, I rose, and accompanied by a maid who loved me, entered the sick man's chamber.— I cast a harsh and cold glance round, and hardly heard the thanks he gave me— having dismissed all the servants, except the maid I mentioned, I prepared to listen to him, imagining some matter relative to his office of chief bailiff and surveyor, alone, could thus disturb his last hours.— “Lady,” said he, in the hollow broken voice of approaching dissolution, “I could not have departed in peace had you not bestowed this indulgence—pardon me, I beseech you, for proposing to my Lord the destruction of those ruins that I have since seen too plainly your heart was ever wrapt in—alas, the proposal costs me my life.—Condescend too to listen to a secret which continually drags back my soul when striving to quit her dungeon—my crime perhaps brings with it a sufficient punishment.—In removing the rubbish of the artificial hermit's cell, in compliance with the directions of my Lord, I one day saw a common laborer turn up something

something which tried his whole strength, when casting a quick and fearful glance around, he covered it with earth. I dispatched the men in hearing to another part, and seizing the arm of him I had watched, I insisted on seeing what he had endeavoured to conceal—it proved to be a small iron chest strongly fastened—I agreed with him to convey it away till the evening, when he might rejoin me, and we would open it and divide the contents together. He yielded rather to necessity than choice, and I took the casket with a purpose God has severely punished—the many keys intrusted to my care supplied one which immediately opened it; under a number of papers and trifles of no value, I found a large sum in gold, and a few jewels—as I knew my partner in the discovery had remarked that the chest was heavy; in the room of the gold and jewels, I substituted an iron crucifix and many rusty keys; then locking the casket, waited anxiously for the evening. The poor laborer seeing me return, wistfully examined my features,

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but not daring to express the doubt visible in his own, expected in silence the deciding hour. I suffered him to take infinite pains to break open a chest that I was conscious would not repay the labor—great was the poor wretch's disappointment when he emptied it—I affected the same chagrin; but turning over the papers, I offered to give him twenty nobles; a sure proof, had he reflected a single moment, that I must have wronged him: he readily accepted this proposal, and, at my desire, promised never to mention the incident; then with much apparent gratitude departed. Eagerly I replaced my guilty gains, and secretly resolved to take an early opportunity of quitting my Lord to commence builder in London; but fear did not suffer me for a time to venture this measure; alas! I have wanted health since to do any thing—from this moment, peace, appetite, and rest have fled me—if worn out with watching, I dropt into a slumber, the idea that my treasure was stolen has made me often start up, and regardless of the cold sweat pro-

produced by the mere apprehension, I have flown in the dead of night to convince myself it was safe—imaginary whispers have ever been near my bed, and uncertain forms have glided through my chamber—the dawn of day never gave me relief, every eye seemed to dive into my secret, and every hand to be intent on impoverishing me—in a word, Lady, to this sad moment it has prematurely brought me; for many months doubtful whether I should survive, I have been considering how to bestow that wealth I could no longer hope to enjoy—the poor man I so basely defrauded of it perished a short time after by the fall of a pillar, and restitution to him can never be made. It came into my head this evening, that you were said to have been brought up in these ruins; certainly I had often seen you walk and weep on the very spot where this chest was found; perhaps therefore in giving it to you I only restore it to the right owner; accept it, Madam, and promise that you will never discover the gift to my Lord.”——This request appeared a
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needleſs injunction, if the treaſure had not been obtained by defrauding Lord Arlington; and though perhaps I ſhould have been ſilent through choice, I thought it beneath me to engage to be ſo:—finding me pauſe, he continued, “fear not any ill deſign in this requeſt, Madam, you will one day be glad you complied with it, and for your own ſake alone is it propoſed; the hand of my Lord is grudging—yours bounteous as that of heaven.—Do not rob yourſelf of the means to be liberal which now are offered to you—yet on no other condition than the vow of ſilence will I give the treaſure up.” A ſtrange deſire to examine the papers more than any I felt for the money, made me at laſt acquieſce. My maid, by his direction, drew the iron cheſt from an obſcure corner, and emptied it of both gold, jewels, and papers, which ſhe and I divided, and with ſome difficulty concealed till we reached my apartment—he ſeemed only to have lived to make this diſcovery, and a few hours after expiated his ſin with his life.

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While he strove to impress my mind with the necessity of concealing the adventure, I pondered deeply over it ; not easily discerning how I should interpret this strange ordination of providence ; it at last occurred to me that the treasure might be put into my hands for the assistance and comfort of my sister :—how did I know whether she was not even then hastening towards me, perhaps impoverished, certainly distressed ?—Oh, how consolatory should I find it to minister to her external wants, though those of her heart might be beyond my power of comforting ! The contempt I felt for Lord Arlington was rooted too deep to admit of my thus applying his fortune, had I been the unlimited mistress of it ; I therefore saw a degree of wisdom and propriety in receiving and secreting a gift, heaven seemed so strangely to put into my hands, as if it were to forerun some yet unknown incident.

The papers consisted chiefly of the correspondence between Mrs. Marlow and

Father Anthony, while yet they were lovers, as well as after the cruel discovery which annulled the nominal union—I perused these invaluable epistles with pulsations of tenderness I lately thought myself incapable of; they recalled me to life and sensibility, and I gathered fortitude from those who now were dust; I raised my eyes to heaven in search of their pure translated souls, and wandering from planet to planet, fancied there must be one peculiarly allotted to lovers now no longer unhappy—A thousand trifles whose value must ever be ideal and local, were preserved with these letters:—cyphers, hair, sonnets, dear perpetuators of those bright hours of youth we look back on with pleasure to the latest moment of decaying life. I kissed the innocent reliques of such an unhappy attachment with devout regard, and held them not the least part of my legacy.

Time dissipated the flattering illusion which led me to expect my sister—my mind sunk into its usual inertitude,
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and the acquisition remained, if not forgotten, at least neglected.

From this profound stupor I was at last roused as by an earthquake—Lord Arlington in hunting fell from his horse; and breaking some blood-vessel, was brought home to appearance lifeless—conscience and humanity called upon me to forget my wrongs; and I made every effort to save him: for a time he appeared to mend; but the incurable habit of inebriety he even at this period indulged, defeated both care and medicine; and after enduring a series of sufferings which annihilated my sense of injury, he expired in the prime of his days.

Good heaven! what a transition did one single event make in my life!—habituated to slavery—accustomed to suppose Lord Arlington destined to survive me, I beheld this incredible revolution with mute surprise.... the horror of his sufferings gave way, when they ceased, to the sweet idea of liberty—liberty sighed out my weary heart, ah! to what purpose have I now ac-

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quired it? I beheld myself in the situation of a criminal, whose shackles are struck off only to launch him into the immense ocean in a little boat without a rudder, oars, or sustenance—where could I find a hope to rest on? alone, in the vast universe, I turned around in vain in search of one generous hand, whose aid I might receive without fear or shame.

The relation of Lord Arlington who succeeded to his title and estate, was an illiterate rude sea officer, whom his illness alone had detained in England. He came on the news of his decease; escorting the late Lord's two sisters, to whom the personals were all devised. I had waited only the reading of the will to quit the melancholy mansion I meant to abjure for the future.—Gracious heaven! how deep was my indignation and rage to find myself mentioned in it as an insane wretch, to whom the testator bequeathed a mere maintenance, and left to be confined under the charge of his sisters in St. Vincent's Abbey, which, as a purchase of his own, de-

descended to them ! Never, in all the trials I had hitherto experienced, had I felt a transport like that this usage excited—to extend his tyranny beyond the grave !—Mean, execrable wretch ! even at the moment that I was exhausting the little constitution his cruelty had left me in unwearied attendance, deliberately to condemn me to an imprisonment so shocking, and render it perpetual !—human nature could not resist so pungent a pang—it *made* the misery it punished ; and I sunk into the dreary gulph once more from which I was lately emerging—my brain still fires but to remember it.—Oh, my sister ! whatever the inflictions of your mysterious fate, those of mine may surely dispute the woful pre-eminence.

The overjoyed Essex dispatched an express, as soon as the news of Lord Arlington's death reached the Court, conjuring me to quit the melancholy prison I had so long inhabited, and retire to a

seat of Lord Southampton, in Herefordshire; whither that nobleman's bride would immediately repair to meet and comfort me. Lady Southampton was the fair cousin of Lord Essex I formerly mentioned, who by marrying privately had wholly lost the favor of the Queen. The declining state of Lady Essex's health, he added, daily promised him that freedom, made doubly desirable now I had recovered mine. It had always, he assured me, been the intention of Lady Southampton to follow her Lord to Ireland; and he besought me to give him the sweet satisfaction of knowing that I was safe in the company and protection of his cousin, solemnly promising not to obtrude himself on me ere the laws of society authorized the avowal of those sentiments which had so long lived in his heart.

The relations of Lord Arlington, possessing by his will an absolute power, intercepted and opened this Letter—far from pouring the balm it contained into my bleeding heart, they kept the dear testimony

mony of an unequalled attachment ; and sent back the messenger with the melancholy news of my insanity and confinement : but Lord Effex had been already duped, and could not easily credit this information. He deputed Henry Tracey, a young officer, much in his confidence, to ascertain my real situation, commanding him not to be dismissed by any other mode of conviction than that of being admitted into my presence.—Alas ! ere this was resolved on, resentment had again fired my bewildered brain, and Lord Arlington had little to apprehend in allowing Tracey to enter my apartment. Buried in a profound stupor, I replied not to his questions, but drawing my mourning veil over my eyes, sat like a self-devoted Persian, the voluntary victim of despair. The faithful Tracey, still fearful of being imposed on, insisted on having my picture, as well as a lock of my hair, to prove to his Lord that it was indeed *myself* he had beheld in this deplorable state ; and having obtained this request, he departed.

But what became of Essex when Tracey returned with this melancholy confirmation?—the testimonials his confidant had brought only added force to the eternal passion of his soul; a thousand times he made Tracey describe the apartment—my dress—my looks—and sometimes fancying even that cautious friend had been deceived; at others, that the wretches in whose power I was left, had, for the short period Tracey was permitted to behold me, stupified my senses; he created a thousand delusions to counteract the fearful impression of the truth.

Distracted with these ideas, Lord Essex set out for Ireland, invested with absolute powers, and heading an army attached to him alike by gratitude and expectation—he had not marched far ere he formed the bold resolution of committing the conduct of the troops to Lord Southampton, and turning off he hastened to St. Vincent's Abbey, determined to judge from his own senses of the state of mine: he arrived there at midnight, and requiring the

the unwilling owners to produce me, in a tone which admitted neither denial or delay, they conducted him to my chamber—a dim lamp alone glimmered in it, and closing my eyes as the stronger lights approached, I waved my hand in stupid silence to have them removed. The transports of grief and surprise which overcame the generous Essex at this terrible conviction, threatened his own intellects—by some wonderful ordination of providence, my cold and apparently uninformed heart waked at that well-known voice—day broke once more upon my soul, and my eyes once more opened to behold their darling object. This surprising effect of his presence would have persuaded him that reason had never deserted me, but that my poor maids expressed a joy at this unexpected revolution too unfeigned to be misconstrued ; they entreated him to leave me time to strengthen my faculties ere he again absorbed them, and he confined to
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stified exclamations, and silent homage, all the passion and projects with which his bosom swelled.

Alithea, who had for years been my favorite attendant, informed him (as soon as he could be persuaded to withdraw, and leave me to repose) of the cruel and unjust will, which by rendering me a prisoner for life, had occasioned this dreadful relapse. Negligent at all times of prudence, and now perhaps of propriety, he boldly told the Arlington family, that he would perish ere I should again be left in their power; and having planted some of his most faithful domestics to guard my chamber door from every one but my own maids, he retired to the apartment allotted him, to meditate on the mode of proceeding least likely to endanger my newly recovered intellects.

Alithea very prudently had me bled, and I sunk into a sweet and sound sleep, the comfort I had long most wanted. I waked late the next morning with in-

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tellects entirely clear, though weak ; I remembered I had seen, or fancied I had seen Effex ; Alithea imparted to me the truth, and shed tears of joy to find I answered her rationally—I yielded to her intreaties in delaying till the afternoon a meeting so dear and affecting, and took the medicinal cordials and other nourishment she offered me ; a few hours strengthened me surprisingly, and I was at last allowed to receive the generous lover my soul so much desired. While he poured forth the most ardent vows of unremitting affection, and surveyed, in tender sorrow, the ravages grief and disappointment had thus early made in my wan countenance, and emaciated form, I beheld with surprise the advantages he had acquired in both instances ; his graceful flower of youth was settled into firmer manhood ; his fair and florid complexion, sunned over by his military exploits, had gained strength without losing delicacy, and his eye, now no less accustomed to command than charm, seemed to employ its first power on all the rest of the world, while
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its last was solely reserved for me. Ah man, happy man ! how superior are you in the indulgence of nature ! blest with scientific resources, with boldness, and an activity unknown to more persecuted woman ; from your various disappointments in life ever spring forth some vigorous and blooming hope, insensibly staunching those wounds in the heart through which the vital powers of the feeble sex bleed helplessly away ; and when relenting fortune grants your wishes, with unblighted powers of enjoyment you embrace the dear-bought happiness ; scarce conscious of the cold dew-drops your cheeks imbibe from those of her, permitted too late to participate your destiny.

It was some days ere I dared trust myself to converse long with Effex, who employed that sweet interval in amusing my mind with lighter topics, while he arranged his future plans ; but finding I still appeared calm, he ventured at last to unfold to me the mighty designs which floated in his imagination. “ Inexorably opposing choice to fate, my dearest Ellinor,”

nor," said he, " never from the moment in which I first beheld you, have I formed a project distinct from yourself ; this I am about to unfold has been for years the child of my dotage—collect your spirits, listen without wonder, and, if possible, approve it : from the moment I knew the base arts that must have been made use of to separate us, I clearly comprehended that we should never unite with the consent of Elizabeth ; but, however indebted to her partial distinction, this was a point in which even she could not controul me ; it is not the posts or advantages I derive from her favor, on which my soul values itself ; elevated on a more solid foundation, it has taken every road to glory, and I may proudly say, given a grace to dotage : yet as that dotage, however unbecoming her years and her rank, has been uniform and generous, I have sworn to yield Elizabeth, to the latest moment of her life, every homage but that of the heart ; and sacrifice to my fealty all except my happiness.—It is hard to reconcile duties
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and inclinations so entirely opposite, yet I think you will own I have done so.

To a blind partiality for me, and her own egregious self-love, the Queen ignobly sacrificed your youth, your hopes, your happiness; but alas, she forgot in so doing, that she would only make them more perfectly mine—without the least consideration for the husband she had given you, a wretch I could at any time look into insignificance, I studied solely how to extricate you from a bondage not more insupportable to you than myself.—Among a thousand other projects, I resolved to apprise the king of Scots of your existence and situation, soliciting from his fraternal regard a safe asylum, and that peace and protection my youth and circumstances would not allow me to offer you. I found means to convey to his knowledge your whole melancholy story—but how shall I declare to you his ungenerous conduct? Fool that I was, to hope the man who could tamely submit to the murder of his mother, would be interested by any other tie! Far from

exerting himself to rescue the dear unhappy sister I conjured him to compassionate, he affected to disbelieve the story of his mother's marriage with the Duke of Norfolk ; though the Countess of Shrewsbury solemnly assured me that he had, through her hands, received from the Royal Mary the most authentic proofs of it, as soon as he escaped from the power of the Regent, and was allowed to act as an independent Sovereign. Anxious without doubt to centre in himself every right of his mother, he voluntarily renounced all regard for either her ashes or her offspring, ignominiously submitting to kiss the hand which had shortened her days.—What after this is to be hoped from the king of Scots ? and why should you sacrifice to a brother, by whom you are disowned, those bright prospects which now dawn before you ? Born of the first English Peer, and the Princess immediate in succession to the Throne—a native of this kingdom ; there is only one thing wanting to establish rights from whence you may justly form the highest hopes—
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authentic testimonials of these facts; and that such still exist, I have certain information—it is true they are dispersed solely among the Catholic relations and friends of Mary, yet do I not despair of obtaining them.—The English, ever disposed to be jealous of their national rights, dread the remotest chance of their annihilation, and already turn their eyes towards the family of Suffolk in preference to receiving a foreign monarch.—That unhappy family, by turns the martyrs of fear and policy, has bled through succeeding generations, till reduced wholly to females; among whom there is not one endued with courage or talents to venture a contest, had they even the priority of birth which rests with you. Let us then adopt the views of Lord Leicester, who certainly meant, by the most watchful policy, to pave the way for your sister's succession, whenever Elizabeth should expire. Your fate is bound up with that of a man much more capable of effecting whatever views he shall adopt.

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Elizabeth daily totters on the verge of the grave—disposed to hate the Prince she has irretrievably injured in the person of his mother, she still refuses to acknowledge the King of Scots for her heir; and has fully invested me with every power that may enable me to profit by the popularity I have honorably acquired. My own birth, though it does not give me a lineal claim to the Crown of England, is yet noble in many generations, and princely in some. Circumstances and merit thus entitle me to match with you—nor need you doubt the success of this project.—Born as you are for empire, endued with beauty to adorn, and majesty to dignify it—with incontestable evidence of your birth (which I will employ every art to procure) I will boldly present to the people of England another blooming Queen—they will with joy adopt you; nor can the feeble attempts of the boyish Scotch pedant against an army won by my munificence, endeared to my command, and relying on my valor, affect a

claim so strongly supported. How many instances does our own history supply where courage and popularity have dethroned monarchs in full possession of every other advantage!—You now are informed of what has long been the ultimate object of my life; every action and view has had a secret reference to it, and far from idling away my youth in the various pleasures the gay court of Elizabeth offered to her favorite, I have continually ranged the seas, watched in camps, disciplined armies, and by every possible means studied to increase my military fame, knowledge, and popularity, as what must one day decide more than my own fate. It is this that has made me eager to conduct the Irish war—In that country I shall be at the head of an army, which will easily enable me to profit by the death of the Queen, without alarming her declining years with the appearance of cabal, mystery, or rebellion.---Boldly resolve then, my love, to accompany me to Ireland, as the only place on earth where
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you can be entirely safe; I will lodge you in some impregnable fortress with Lady Southampton; I will remain in the camp, and never approach it but by your permission---I demand this instance of your confidence, of your love; and swear in return inviolable honor and obedience—Oh! answer me not rashly, sweet Ellinor—rather recall the fatal moment of obstinate prudence which once before brought on both so tedious a period of suffering, and remember you again have the power of deciding my fate and your own.

Effex rose from my feet, and left me buried in the deepest reflection; my mind, however, instantaneously adopted the aspiring project he had presented to it. Through the dark and heavy cloud which had long hung over my soul, the sun of love now pierced at once, and turned it all to ambient gold:---To mount a throne; to share it with the choice of my heart; to give to him that sovereignty I should owe to his valor---I was astonished that the idea

could so long have escaped me: yet such a train of misfortunes had succeeded my birth, as might well obliterate my sense of its rights. “Base and unworthy son!” sighed I, “ungenerous, cruel brother! why should I sacrifice to thee my only chance on this side the grave?” The mean acquiescence of James, under a blow which almost nerved my arm against the royal murderer, had already sufficiently shocked my feelings, and shut him out of all my plans; alas, I could only excuse his misconduct by supposing that he was yet subjected to his mother’s enemies, though even then, a generous soul would resolutely have protested against the evil it could not prevent; but to be assured that he sacrificed an inviolable duty, and every social feeling at the shrine of that bloated idol, *self*; robbed him of all claim to the feelings, the duties, he renounced. The determined plan of the generous Essex had every thing in its favor, nor was my concurrence so necessary to his success as happiness—but wherefore should I hesitate,

fitate,

state, when not to unite in it was to deliver myself up to an implacable enemy? yet, as avowedly to depart with Effex, or even after him, would awaken dangerous suspicions in the mind of Elizabeth, and confirm all the slanders of the world; I pondered much on a singular idea that arose in my mind, by which both might be obviated; indeed the situation of my health would have sufficiently opposed my going with him, had no other objection occurred.---I perceived an air of stifled anger in Effex when he returned, which I conjured him to expound:---“It is a matter of no consequence,” said he, with his usual frankness; “fortunately the few friends I have brought with me are tried and valiant, and we have the power in our own hands: the wretches, my love, who surround you, pretend an authority from the Queen, as well as from the late Lord Arlington, for your detention; this will oblige us to use a violence I would rather have avoided; but that is a trifle.” “Oh! call not any thing a trifle which affects your safety, how-

ever remotely," cried I; "in yielding to the bold project you have ventured to form, beware I do not become its ruin---yes, look not on me with so marked a wonder; my soul accords to, adopts at once all your views. I will at last indulge my heart, and thus affiance it to yours---born to pursue your fortune, I will joyfully consent to partake it, so you, in return, swear the confidence will render you but more guarded; in considering my own honor, I am only watching over yours; pledge then your word that you will not interfere with my plan, and I in return will vow, that all I henceforward form, shall have the same tendency with your own."

The generous Effex scarce credited his senses, and gave with readiness the assurance I desired.---Resolved to guard my sister's prior rights, and unable to judge of the motives which might bury her for a time in oblivion, I insisted on his supporting her claim in preference to mine, if ever she should appear; and he perhaps the more readily acquiesced in this request, from a conviction that she no longer

longer existed, as all my opinions on that head appeared to him entirely visionary.

Refusing to confide in this dear rash lover the means by which I meant to rejoin him, I obliged him to assume an air of grief and despair, which persuaded the Arlington family that I had relapsed into insanity. In the interim a maid of mine had been seized with an epidemic fever of the most dangerous kind; I impatiently hastened the departure of Essex, lest the cruel malady should infect him, and conjured him to wait with Lady Southampton at the port, from whence the troops had already embarked, till I should rejoin him. The air of satisfaction he perceived in me made him comply against his better judgment, and the Arlington race, no less overjoyed at his departure than my supposed relapse, and fearful of the epidemic fever, shut up those who immediately attended on me, in the quarter of the Abbey I inhabited, avoiding it themselves as though the plague were enclosed there.

In this solitude I executed a surprising project I had long meditated : from the moment I was informed of the mock interment of Lord Leicester, my mind had dwelt on the idea; I saw it was only to methodize the most wild and romantic plan, and, however unfeasible it at first appeared, time might form and bring it to effect—The treasure of the surveyor now became a treasure indeed; reflection convinced me that the bequest originated in his having been the confidant as well as witness of his Lord's ungenerous will, and by thus disposing of his own acquisition, he enabled me to escape from the despicable bondage it entailed upon me, without betraying his trust.---The maid, who alone witnessed the mysterious legacy, had, by her inviolable silence on so singular an event, sufficiently proved that she could merit my whole confidence; fortunately, she was no less favored by those in whose power I was left, and became of course the properest, and only assistant I could fix on:---by thus turning the artifice of the Queen upon herself, I might at once escape from
her

her power, and that of the guardians under whose care she had placed me; and gratify the first wish of Essex without endangering his safety.

Alithea embraced the plan with joy, and engaged her parents, who were laborers in the neighbourhood, to aid the delusion.---I affected to be seized with the same fatal fever as soon as the maid's symptoms became mortal, and when she soon after died, resigned my bed to her corpse: her hair, height, complexion, and age, so far agreed with mine as to secure me from common observation, and dread of the contagion saved us from a very strict scrutiny: as it was believed that the maid expired nearly at the same time with myself, by Alithea's judicious management her supposed body was to be delivered to the parents of that faithful domestic; when placing myself and treasure in the homely coffin, I was boldly conveyed like the Empress Maud through the midst of my enemies, and lodged in their humble cot, till enough recovered to pursue the route of Essex.

Alithea

Alithea now published the news of my death through the family, who heard of it with joy; the unguarded conduct of the generous Effex had suggested to them, that to have acted under the authority of the Queen, might one day be a very insufficient vindication:---this idea added fear to that hatred they always entertained for me, and with pleasure they buried both those passions in my grave.---Having surveyed my wardrobe, jewels, and papers, without finding the least deficiency, they prepared for my interment, and discharged my immediate attendants; among them the favoured one who had aided my scheme, and her return to her parents restored peace to my bosom.

From the humble cot of that honest creature's parents do I close this period of my memoirs---here, as from an invisible world, have I surveyed the gloomy pageant, with which the erroneous judgments of those from whom I escaped have dignified a low-born female, and by placing her pompously at the side of Lord Arlington, they perhaps have blundered
uncon-

unconsciously on propriety.---As the sable
 rain wound by my window, my soul
 paused on the solemn vanity——Oh!
 that in thy tomb, thou quiet sleeper, fighed
 I, may be interred with my name all
 the painful part of my existence! that
 renovated to a new and happier being, I
 may emerge again into a world which
 still opens a flowery path before me,
 with corrected spirits, unfaltering reason,
 and a temper superior to the shocks of
 misfortune!——

* * * * *

The soul, ever capricious and uncer-
 tain, fully enjoys only the pleasures it
 makes for itself.---Often do I seem even in
 this rustic asylum, concealed in the coarse
 garments of the other sex, and looking to-
 wards a distant kingdom as my home, to
 have hoards of hope and happiness to build
 on, my youthful, healthful days were never
 blest with.——

* * * * *

My

My own fate has once more recalled to my mind that of Matilda—I have meditated much on a sister so dear—alas, too certainly Effex is in the right, and there exists not a being I can call by that name.—Long years have succeeded each other, and still that incomprehensible mystery, that dreadful silence continues; nor is there a circumstance but death that could occasion it.—Farewell then, oh name ever so pleasant to my lips, sink deep into my heart, and remain eternally engraved there—farewell, thou pure spirit! too ethereal for a world so gross, I will no more look for thee on its surface, I will no more imagine thee beneath it—no, I will now raise my steadfast eye to that heaven “where the wicked cease from troubling,” and in some yet undiscovered star fancy I behold thee! Ah deign, if so, to guide the uncertain steps of a wanderer, and, if my cruel fate conduct them still toward precipices, irradiate the scene, and deliver me from the danger!—My spirits are highly wrought, and a solemnity too exquisite for description possesses every

every faculty—I must steep them all in oblivion ere I recover my equanimity.——

* * * * *

Happiness! undefinable good, in what shall I comprise thee? no, I will not suppose it can be done in gold, and yet how pure was the transport a little of that vile metal called into the care-furrowed countenances of Alithea's venerable parents! To the earth which gave, I have restored the remainder; it is buried eastward under the spreading chesnut planted by Edward IV.—that popular tree, protected alike from the caprice of its owner, and the spade of the laborer, will hide it safely: but, oh! if ever one noble heart sighs under its shade, oppressed with the sting of penury, may some good angel whisper, “you rest on that which can fully relieve you.”

All is now prepared for my flight; I have refused the attendance of Alithea; it will be well supplied in the remembrance

brance that she is happy—indulgent heaven has given to *her* parents who grow old in peace and virtue, a lover who knows not falsehood or ambition, and a soul justly grateful for blessings beyond all valuation—the faithful creature delays the happiness of him she loves till he shall have conveyed this broken narrative into the hands of Lady Pembroke; nor do I fear to trust him with it.—Dear, noble friend, once more my soul fondly salutes you; bestow on my flight those pious prayers with which virtue consecrates our purposes, and believe mine rise ever for you.

LADY PEMBROKE WRITES.

Hardly had I recovered from the surprise and grief occasioned by the publication of this sweet creature's suppositious death, ere a rustic demanded permission to see me, and mysteriously delivered the wonderful packet—alas, how affecting did I find it!

far, however, from drying up my tears at learning the angel yet lived, I looked with terror on the future, lest every following day should multiply, or terribly finish her miseries. Ah, dear Matilda! I cannot agree with this fair visionary, who so easily adopts the romance of her lover.—Something seems to assure me thou art still alive, and suffering; and for thy sake I will preserve these melancholy memorials: alas! perhaps it were more generous to destroy them.

LETTER I.

Dated Drogheda.

FROM the safe shores of another kingdom once more do I greet my friend.—Alas! ill can we judge for ourselves, dear Lady Pembroke.

Provided with a fleet horse, I set out to follow Essex, but scarce had I travelled a single day, ere my shattered constitution (no longer able to sustain the least toil) claimed two, to recover the fatigue of the first. During my stay at the inn, my youth,

youth, the delicacy of my person and manners, with the air of reserve I found it necessary to assume, excited a curiosity my liberality alone was able to bound, though even that gave rise to suspicions almost equally dangerous. I began to fear that my scheme would wholly fail in the execution; I hired, however, two rustics, well recommended, as a guide, and an escort, yet in travelling on the solitary mountains of Wales, often dared not turn my head over my shoulder, lest in my guards I should behold my murderers. My impaired health rendered the journey very tedious; during its progress, I passed for a poor youth following the steps of my father, and far gone in a consumption—After immense fatigue, I arrived at length at the port; where I understood with inexpressible chagrin that Essex had embarked for Ireland a week before.—Alas! a moment's recollection enabled me to account for this, apparently, strange desertion:—in my eagerness to conceal my favorite scheme, I had forgotten to guard
against

against the chance of his being informed of my supposed death ere I reached him. On inquiry, I plainly perceived that he had left spies in the neighbourhood of St. Vincent's Abbey when he quitted it, who, misled by report, had hastened after him with news of the melancholy event. I learnt that he had delayed crossing from time to time without giving any reason for it, but on being roused by the arrival of two officers, he ordered the seamen to be called in the dead of night, and embarked the moment the tide favoured his departure.

Though this information left me only myself to reproach, it did not lessen my chagrin. I wandered toward the shore to meditate at leisure; it was still littered with soldiers and their appendages: they were indulging with ungoverned licence in drinking and riot.—Every thing I beheld, increased my fears of the voyage; it was indeed a tremendous project, to embark with a numerous body of licentious men for an unknown country, while wrapt in mys-

tery myself, and without a protector.—How if actuated by curiosity, or a less excusable motive, they should guess at my sex, and pry into my story? Perhaps even the name of their general would want influence to guard me. I turned woman again, and trembled at the bare idea. While irresolute in what manner to dispose of my unfortunate self, I observed a body of travellers approaching, and understood with joy that it was Lady Southampton and her train, escorted by a chosen troop, for whom those I had already seen waited.—I blest indulgent heaven, which thus relieved me from the effects of my own indiscretion, and demanded to see her---to see her was enough, for with the penetration natural to her sex, she instantly knew me, and throwing her arms around my neck, reproached me with a generous freedom for having retarded her journey, by obliging her to wait in vain for my arrival: and finally, for shocking her with the fictitious story of my death---I explained to her my unguarded conduct, and its motives---She

assured

assured me that she dreaded the effect it might have on my lover, as her Lord had not time to write more than that Effex was in despair for my loss, nor dared he venture to leave him; therefore conjured her to confide herself to the care of the officers he mentioned, and follow with all expedition.---This information doubled the regret which had already seized on me; but to guard against all suspicion and inquiry, I resolved to retain my masculine habit, and pass for one of Lady Southampton's pages, till safely lodged in Ireland.

We arrived here last night, and found a letter from Lord Southampton, lamenting the impossibility of waiting for his Lady, without abandoning Effex to a grief which urged him to rashness and despair; he ended with conjuring her to remain in this town till he had considered how to dispose of her safely.—Oh, fortune, fortune, how unfairly do we accuse thee, when folly alone has led us into error! I am more miserable than it is possible to ex-

press. Lady Southampton would fain persuade me that this oversight may eventually prove lucky, as it will prevent my again seeing Essex ere the death of his Lady.— Ah ! what alteration can her loss make in my fate ?—“ I tell you, my watchful friend, you cannot love my honor more than I do his safety—between him and me there is another bar not less insurmountable.— Did not my sister’s marriage with a favorite of Elizabeth cost him his life ? Alas, perhaps hers too was sacrificed !”— Over her mysterious fate a dark veil early fell, dipt perhaps in the blood of her beloved—rather may I see my own veins opened, than survive such a calamity ; but even at this moment it has perhaps fallen on me, and I may be dying in Essex while yet unconscious of my fate—oh, what horrors take possession of my soul at the bare idea !——Lady Southampton has sealed her English dispatches, and I can only say adieu.

LETTER II.

Dated Drogheda.

BOUND to this spot, my generous friend, and dreading all which passes beyond it, hardly can my heart feel the congratulation you bestow. Environed by enemies, and rendered rash by despair, Essex now renounces the glorious visions he possessed my imagination with, and resigns himself wholly up to his command.—Oh, that the arrow which stabs me should have been sharpened by my own hand!—All here is alarm, uncertainty, and confusion—we get and lose in the course of every day a passage to our friends, nor dare we trust to that channel aught of importance. Sir Coniers Clifford with a chosen body of troops was yesterday surrounded, himself and half his men cut off immediately—among the officers was a relation of Lady Southampton's; she has been weeping the whole day for him.—For my own part, conscious that I have not a tear to spare for common afflictions, I

gather mine into my heart, which feels ready to pour forth a deluge the moment one of my many fears shall be confirmed.—

You can form no conception of the wants, the woes, the horrible scenes we witness.— Born and bred in the arms of luxury and prosperity, a distant war but faintly affects our minds; but oh, how tremendous does it appear when once we are driven into its tempestuous seat!—death, ghastly death, assumes a bloody variety of forms; while rapine, famine, sickness, and poverty, fearfully forerun him.

I have hitherto thought my sister's fate more consummately wretched than even my own, but how is every evil lightened by comparison!—Beloved Matilda, born as you were to woe, you saw but one bounded prospect of the infinitude the globe presents to us; the horrors of this were unknown to you—uncomforting is the pillow of her who sleeps within the sound of a drum, and fancies its every stroke is fate.—Is this to live? Ah no! it is to be continually dying.

This

This country so nearly allied to our own, yet offers to our view a kind of new world; divided into petty states, inveterately hating each other, it knows not the benefit of society, except when necessity combines the various parties against a common enemy; yet, though necessity unites, it cannot blend them; the least cessation of general danger awakens all their narrow partialities and prejudices, which continually break out with bloody violence. The advantages of commerce, the charms of literature, all the graces of civilization, which at once enrich the mind, and form the manners, are almost unknown to this people; with a savage pride they fancy their very wants virtue, and owe to their poverty an unregulated valor, which often enables them to contend with well-disciplined troops, whom they sometimes defeat by mere want of knowledge; at others, on the contrary, they obstinately pursue an unequal contest, while speculating reason turns away from the bloody scene, vainly conscious that their mingled bodies

strew the earth, only because no benevolent being has yet deigned to attempt the conquest of their minds.

How deeply must such reflections operate upon a heart bound up in the life of the accomplished leader ! endued with but the common powers of humanity, exposed with the rest, alike to the sword and to the elements, he, even he, must one day perish ; and while I weep the wretches every hour deprives of their beloved protectors, I know not but that I may at the same moment be added to the number.—Ah, if despair should impel Essex,—his natural heroism needs no such incentive,—should he fall, unconscious of my yet surviving, to that fatal though well designed artifice I should forever impute his loss, and die for having feigned to do so.

A wild fancy has taken strange possession of my mind—Lady Southampton says it is madness ; perhaps it really is so, but I can think of nothing else : she, however is too timid to judge—she will pass her whole life here I really believe.

Were

Were I but for a moment to behold that expressive countenance,—were I by kind of resurrection again to appear before him!——

Something strangely impels me—a chosen troop are now setting out.—I shall be safe under their protection.—Ah, if this ungovernable impulse should be but presentiment of his danger—never, never should I forgive myself were I to leave him, wounded and dying, to the care of persons comparatively indifferent.

“Argue no longer, my dear importunate friend, I will go, but depend on my hastening back.”—Lady Southampton would have made a wretched love for Effex; she is the most apprehensive of women; but she was not born to mate with that aspiring hero.

T H E

R E C E S S, &c.

P A R T V.

A Silence so tedious will make you number me among the dead; recover yourself, my beloved friend—born to a perpetual contest with ill fortune, I sink not even yet under the oppression.—I have been collecting all my thoughts to pursue my strange recital, more strange indeed every day.

In

In our way towards Ulster, we were intercepted by a body of the rebellious Irish, and a desperate skirmish ensued.—How shall I own it, and call myself the love of Essex? yet so it was—I, who had been so valiant in imagination, and remote from the field of action—I, who had in fancy lifted a sword with the strength of Goliath, and interposed a shield before Essex, heavier perhaps than myself, thrunk into annihilation at the bare sight of the conflict; and the faintings which laid me among the slain, perhaps alone saved me from being added to their number. I revived in the hands of some ferocious women, who in stripping the dead, had discovered at one moment that I yet lived, and was of their own sex. Induced either by a sentiment of humanity, or the hope of a reward, they listened to my eager supplications for life, and conveyed me to a neighbouring cabin; whither they summoned a priest, who opened a vein in my arm. On feebly re-

reviving once more, I cast my eyes round in speechless astonishment, scarce knowing whether I should think my escape a blessing. I was environed by a set of beings who in complexion alone bore any resemblance to myself, their language, manners, and lives, seeming no more analogous, than those of the inhabitants of the Torrid Zone. I laboured in vain to comprehend them, or to make myself understood, and was in despair giving up the attempt, when the priest already mentioned came to my relief. Through his means I informed them that the Lord Deputy would redeem me at any ransom, provided they secured me from danger and insult. I should, I believe, have ensured my own safety, had not the victorious party learnt, by some straggler, that an English woman of distinguished rank had been discovered among the slain. They eagerly turned back to demand me, and the hope of reward alike influencing my preservers to keep me in their hands, a dispute no less fierce, though not so bloody,

bloody,

bloody, as that I had before witnessed, followed; it was too violent to be compromised, and at length, as the only way to prevent murder, both parties agreed that I should be put into the hands of their General, Tiroen; or, as some called him, O'Neal. Intreaties or resistance would have been equally vain, and I was obliged to rejoice that they thought me of consequence enough to act so honourably by me.

During this interval, one of the servants deputed by Lady Southampton immediately to attend on me, having lingered a few minutes behind the English troop, followed to rejoin them at the moment of the onset: the sound of the firing reached him ere he fell in with the scouts, and clapping spurs to his horse, he flew back to the village we all had lately quitted, there to wait in safety the event of the contest: at this place he was informed a band of rebels had issued out from an ambuscade formed in the neighbouring mountain: and while he was wavering what step to take, the
news

news of my sex and capture suddenly reached him; struck with the idea of some important mystery, as well from my disguise as the cautions of his Lady, he hastened back to her with the strange intelligence. The generous but timid Lady Southampton, impressed solely with the idea of my danger, wrote, instantaneously to Effex, briefly reciting all he did not know of my story, and strongly conjuring him to exert his utmost influence to preserve me from danger or insult.

But who shall paint the feelings of Effex, when this surprising intelligence first reached him! intelligence which, in one moment, opened all those sources of tenderness in his soul grief and despair had well nigh congealed. To think I still lived would have been consummate happiness, had I not been thus unaccountably snatched away, even at the very moment of my miraculous renovation: so singular a complication of events almost deprived him of his senses, and wrought impulse up to agony. Perhaps the last

un-

untoward incident of my life was necessary to save his brain from partaking the distractions of his mind:—sick at the heart of an incurable sorrow—fatigued with the cares of government, and the slavery of command, the news of my existence and capture made him find in distinctions hitherto so oppressive, the sole prospect of recovering a treasure, which alone could give value to his future life.

From the knowledge acquired in his military command, Effex was enabled to decide on the character of Tiroen—he justly believed it unprincipled and ungovernable; how must he tremble then to recollect that my fate was in his hands! In a conjuncture so dangerous he resigned himself entirely up to the guidance of an impassioned heart, and dispatched an officer of rank, charging the arch-rebel, by the blood of thousands yet unspilt, not to exasperate the English, and himself in particular, by maltreating the lady fortune had thrown into his power; for whose ransom any sum

sum was tendered her captors should demand.

This rash and impetuous address had consequences only less dangerous than those it guarded against. Tiroen unfortunately discovered at once that he had the happiness of the Lord Deputy in his keeping; and though he flattered him from time to time with promises of noble treatment, he secretly determined, no doubt, that if he ever parted with me, it should be upon his own terms.

It was not till several of these messages had passed, that Tiroen's curiosity led him to pay me a visit: the attention excited by my masculine habit had led me immediately to request one more suited to my sex; and the delicate situation I stood in, obliging me to conduct myself with the utmost caution, I had thought it peculiarly fortunate to escape the notice of the General.

The continual repetition of his tedious visits, when once he had seen me; the lavish supply of such accommodations as
that

that ravaged country then afforded—an obstinate silence on the state of my affairs, and the most wearisome discussions of his own, all too soon convinced me that neither his pride, his ambition, or his ferocity, had been able to guard the heart of Tiroen from that powerful passion which invigorated the being of his distinguished rival—I trembled at recollecting that I was wholly in his power—already misjudged as the voluntary mistress of Essex, unwilling to announce myself, and unable, had I done so, to prove my right to distinction, mine was indeed a fearful situation. I was not allowed to hold any correspondence with the English, and only knew by the watch kept over me, that a human being was anxious for my release.

Whatever consequences might ensue from my appearing pleased with the distinctions lavished on me by Tiroen, I felt every day more sensibly that I had no other means of avoiding the licentious insolence of his officers; who fancied their services

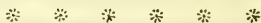
so important to the cause they had espoused, as to secure their conduct from too strict a scrutiny.

Tiroen meantime sought occasions to break off, renew, and prolong, the secret intercourse in which he had now engaged with Effex ; but a lingering treaty agreed not with the fiery impatience of that unfortunate hero. His divided soul no longer attended to the duties of his command—the business of the war was at an end—Effex was no longer a cool and prudent General, watchful to seize every advantage, and harass the enemy—alas, he was now only a wild and extravagant lover, ready to sacrifice every consideration to the recovery of one adored individual.—Delivered up to passion, to terror, to agony, to every torturing excess of overstrained sensibility, at this fatal period the generous Effex was gradually sacrificing the whole renown of a life hitherto so glorious. The news of Tiroen's love crowned his misfortunes; and that execrable traitor, determined to bring, if possible, the Lord Deputy to his terms, by various emissaries had him informed of

plots he never laid against me, and repulses he never sustained; always speciously disowning such designs, in terms calculated only to redouble the suspicions of his rival.

By artifices like these the warlike talents and dignified mind of Essex were kept in absolute subjection; he no longer dared to exert the valour which burned proudly at his heart, but stifling every emotion love did not excite, he eagerly engaged in a secret and dangerous treaty.—The rash proposal of Essex to confer with Tiroen from the opposite banks of a rivulet, I imputed to the passionate desire a lover ever has to judge of the person and talents of the man who dares to rival him:—this interview could not be kept a secret—alas, perhaps it decided the fortune of the Lord Deputy.—Misjudged from that moment by a busy world which sees only the surface of things, to timidity, to avarice, to indolence, to ambition, by turns, has been ascribed an incident, of which love had all the merit or the shame.—Ah! had the erroneous multitude considered

but a moment, surely they had discerned a mystery in his conduct.—What could ambition, glory, pride, require, he did not possess already? If to hold the most absolute sway over the most absolute of Sovereigns could gratify those wishes, they were gratified.—Rather, ye busy Many, learn to pity than condemn the generous frenzy of a bleeding heart which boldly sacrificed every thing to an overruling, an irresistible passion—a passion mine must break to answer—and it *will* break.—Oh! my shook brain, how wild it wanders!——



Gay visions of a higher, happier sphere, where are ye? ah! deign to gild awhile this gloomy world!—how inexpressibly sweet are at intervals the trances of my mind!——care, sorrow, suffering, mortality itself is forgotten; absorbed in a bright obscure, every high-wrought feeling hovers on the verge of a long eternity—fye on this earthy cover-

covering, how it drags down my soul, my
soaring soul !

* * * * *

I wake from these day dreams, and re-
turn to my subject—in fruitless and tedious
negotiations were thus consuming those
days we would in vain recall, those impor-
tant days fraught with the very fate of the
noblest of mankind.

The long delays, the eternal disap-
pointments, exhausted my patience ;
agitated by a thousand apprehensions
which no less concerned my lover than
myself, misery once more struck her iron
fangs through my quivering heart. Com-
pelled to struggle with a soul justly con-
scious of virtue ; to support an apparent
tranquillity ; to adopt an artificial cha-
racter ; to suffer Tiroen to delude him-
self into a persuasion that the tie between
me and Essex was dishonourable, lest an un-
certain one should want power to restrain
him, how many implicated indignities
did I patiently endure !—Persecuted with

his base solicitations ; overwhelmed with bribes as splendid as they were contemptible, I could ward off his expectations only by a feint my nature disdained. In answer to his unbounded offers, and tender protestations, I one day bade him remember that in those instances he could not surpass the generous lover he sought to rival ; for that it was in the power of Essex to give me every thing but his *title*.—Tiroen paused indignantly for a moment, and my heart exulting in its artifice, fondly hoped the spectres of his whole line of royal ancestors would sweep before him, precluding every idea of a union so dishonorable. His whole estimation, and the success of the war depended, I well knew, on his retaining the affections of the people, and how could he hope for those if he disgraced the blood of the O'Neals ? He scarce credited the boldness of idea which appeared in this hint of mine, and struck with a persuasion that I must be of some superior rank to dare thus to elevate my eyes to him, he once more attempted to—
dive

dive into a secret so carefully and obstinately concealed. I was however on my guard, and sunk again into my original obscurity. Still eager to possess a woman he could not esteem, he at last assured me (after having observed that an engagement to a lady of his own family alone held his party together) that he would bind himself in private by every tie I should dictate. I unwarily replied, the conduct and love of Effex had been so unquestionably noble, that nothing but a superior and public marriage could vindicate me even to myself, in breaking with him.—Tiroen's look and answer made me sensible at once of the danger of this speech, and that in leaving him without hope, I had left myself without safety. I felt from this moment like a wretch entirely devoted; and under the name of indisposition (of which indeed I had sufficient reason to complain) I procured from a surgeon who bled me, a quantity of liquid laudanum, some portion of which

I pretended to take every night, but in reality reserved the whole of it for that fatal one which should confirm my fears.

Such were the sufferings of Effex and myself, while the two camps were in sight of each other, and nothing but the most guarded vigilance could prevent the incensed English from coming to action.—I was one evening alone in the tent allotted to me (for Tiroen would never trust me in any neighbouring fort or town), which, from the ascent it was pitched on, commanded the whole valley, and looking with tearful eyes towards the increasing fires in the English camp, when Tiroen approached me unawares—his complexion was flushed with wine, and his eyes and air shewed a determination at which my nature shuddered:—no longer regarding decorum or respect, his manners made me in a moment sensible that I had deferred taking my laudanum too long.—An idea, at which I have never yet ceased to wonder, suggested itself to my mind; and while fluctuating between the possible and im-

impossible, I a little soothed the boisterous wretch at whose profligate vows I trembled :—intoxication deprived him of the guard he had so long kept over his lips—imagining himself already possessed of the beloved of Essex, Tiroen could not forbear vaunting of the address which secured her to him.—I learnt with equal horror and amazement, that the long delay my capture and the subsequent treaties had occasioned in the war, were all concerted strokes of diabolical policy to ruin the fair fame of the Lord Deputy ;—that during these fatal treaties, he himself had sent the most indubitable proofs to Elizabeth of the misconduct of her General, and had every reason to suppose he would immediately be recalled, and ignominiously punished—satisfied that she could never select another equally dear to the army, on which every thing in war depended.——I turned with ineffable disdain towards the monster.——Oh, that an eye-beam could have killed him ! —Engrossed, however, by his various views,

views, inflated with self-love and applause, and confused with wine, he saw not a glance which would instantaneously have unfolded my whole heart, to the execrable, the ungenerous traitor; unworthy the race he sprung from, and the sword he drew.—He continued to expatiate on his hopes of wholly expelling the English, and ascending the throne of Ireland: but what after this unwary and black discovery could his views be to me? A thousand dangers were pressing upon my soul, and a thousand projects floating in my brain: I had hardly temper or recollection to methodize any;—while he continued to charm himself with the disclosure of all his vanity and ambition, hatred and horror nerved my heart with courage to execute a strange design, the desperation of such a moment alone could have suggested. Convinced, by the tenor of his discourse and conduct, that I could escape his licentious purposes only by feigning an intention of yielding to them, I smoothed my agonized features into a smile which almost

most stiffened to a convulsion, and complained of thirst—a glass of water stood by, of which I drank—inclination no less than gallantry, made him insist on pledging me; but refusing to give him the water without wine, I mixed it with an officiousness perhaps but too obvious, adding the whole quantity of laudanum provided for myself. The haste and tremor attending so dangerous a transaction, might well have excited distrust in him at any time, much more at such a crisis; but not in a condition to observe very strictly, and delighted with a condescension on my part—alike new and unexpected, in a transport of gallantry he dropt on his knees, and uniting my name with his own, cemented both with that of happiness: that long lost blessing seemed to tremble back into my heart as he eagerly swallowed the beverage. Sleep had before hovered over his eyelids; it was now forerun by stupefaction. The hour of rest arrived; but the women who usually slept in the outer tent came not near it—I could not doubt but that their absence was owing to the previous orders given

given

given by the General, and falling on my knees, entreated him who armed the Assyrian with courage voluntarily to dare the situation into which I was brought unconsenting, to bear me boldly and safely through it. A fortitude equal to the danger, seemed to spring from the address and the occasion.—The regimental cloak Tiroen had thrown off on entering, served to cover my masculine habit, which I resumed with expedition : it was a cloak so remarkable, and familiar to every eye in the camp, as almost to ensure my safety. I overweighed my throbbing temples with his warlike plume, and finally, drawing from his finger a signet to produce if necessary, I boldly grasped his dagger to decide my fate should I be discovered, and issued forth a second Judith.

I had warily marked the progress of the night ; the last watch had now gone by, and the time was past when it was probable any officer should be stirring of note enough to address the General. I had heard Tiroen say it was his common practice to walk the camp at night, and
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in that confidence ventured to pass for him. Scarce had I gone a hundred paces when the homage of the centinels assured me that the counterfeit was undiscovered.

With an agitated heart I passed from one to another, guided only by the distant lights (for Tiroen always pitched his camp on a hill) till near the advanced guard; I then retired behind a large tent, and disrobing myself of their General's accoutrements, put on a common hat I had carried for that purpose:—what were my terrors when having reached the confines of the camp, now doubly watched, I presented the signet as a proof that I was sent on earnest business.—The guard hesitated, but after tediously debating, while I went through tortures, they judged it prudent to admit a token which alone could have enabled me to reach them, and I was suffered to pass.

I shot like an arrow from a bow when once these dreaded limits were overleaped, scarce daring to address my very soul to heaven,

heaven, lest one lost moment should undo me.

Whether my eyes had deceived me in the imagined nearness of the English camp, or my trembling and unguided feet had wandered wide of it, I knew not; but sorely were they blistered ere I approached its limits—piercing through thickets which tore alike my garments and my flesh, with spirits fainting even to death, I suddenly heard a scout give the watch-word in English. Overjoyed to think myself safe, I unhappily wanted presence of mind to pronounce a single syllable, and the officious foldier mistaking me for a spy, levelled his piece, and instantly pierced my side—My spirits were no longer equal to contending with danger, or with death, and the fear of discovery being the prevailing sentiment of my sex, I feebly conjured the man, if he hoped for pardon, to bear me to the tent of the Lord Deputy. The delicacy of my complexion and clothes had already surpris'd the inadvertent foldier—he quickly called together some
of

of his companions, who assisted in laying me on a hurdle, and bearing me toward the tent of Effex. The morning was now broke—I saw the early beams of the sun emblazon the golden ornaments of the General's tent—some officers came out of it as I approached.—My heart, from which life seemed every moment ready to issue, made a courageous effort to collect into itself the scattered principles of a being I appeared on the very point of resigning. I fancied ere Effex yet spoke, I heard the voice so dear to me—I fancied ! ah, I indeed *saw* him rush forward on the first hint ; out, root-bound as it were, he stopped before he came to me, and sent his very soul forth in a groan.—“ Yes, Effex,” cried I, extending my feeble hand, “ the wretch heaven did not allow to live in thy arms, is blest with its next indulgence in being permitted to die there.”——But how shall I describe the tearful transports, the touching agonies of his recovered intellects ! sunk under the keen ecstasy of the moment,

ment, and long faintings succeeded, occasioned by my loss of blood, that once more brought me to the very verge of the grave.

The amiable Lady Southampton came at the instance of her cousin, and gave, by her presence, a decorum to my situation it had long wanted. Every effort of art was exerted to soothe my broken spirits, and strengthen my exhausted frame. He, who alone could give efficacy to medicine, hovered ever near, and when speech was interdicted, by affectionate looks sustained me.—Ah, how pleasant were even these sufferings! how delightful was it to collect back into my heart those gentle impulses war and terror had driven from their home!—to affiance my soul in silence to its only Lord, and to fancy that whatever fate heaven should hereafter ordain him, mine could no longer be divided from it!

As soon as my amended health allowed, I entered into a detail of all that had passed since Lord Effex left me at St. Vincent's

Vincent's Abbey. He in return informed me, that the lethargy into which Tiroen was plunged by the laudanum I had so hastily administered, was very near being fatal to him, as the utmost effort of care and medicine could only preserve him the faculty of breathing; since to disturb his deep and unwholesome slumbers always threw him into a dangerous delirium. The courageous effort by which I had recovered my liberty, he added, still formed the whole conversation of both camps. I blessed the awful power who saved me the guilt of murdering even a villain, and did not immediately remark that Essex gave me no farther information.

I too soon, however, learnt from Lady Southampton the painful truths my Lord sought to hide—that Elizabeth had incessantly urged him to prosecute a war which his fears for me had hitherto suspended; but finding at length that both intreaties and commands were lost upon him, she at length

grew cold and disgusted. His friends in England had given him but too much reason to believe that his enemies were gradually acquiring the ascendancy in her heart, he as gradually lost; since all her favors were lavished on Sir Walter Raleigh, the house of Cecil, and the Earl of Nottingham, a party who had long meditated the downfall of Essex and Southampton, of which they now spoke as a certainty; and that even the common people beheld with discontent the slow progress of the war in Ireland, nor could Essex any longer depend upon popularity.

The unguarded friend who made me this recital, engrossed by her own share in it, forgot how it interested me. I called to mind the information sent by Tiroen to Elizabeth, which but too well accounted for the Queen's anger and disgust, and conceived at once all its probable consequences. Essex, unlike all other favorites, could never be brought to know any claim to superiority but merit——incapable of those little arts
by

re-
 by which mean souls attach the infid-
 ous train of sycophants a Court always
 abounds with; he had ever scorned a
 partial monopoly, and politic distribution,
 of posts and places.——The mercenary
 wretches, who had bowed to him in vain,
 paid their court to his enemies with more
 success, and instructed by them in every
 weakness of the favorite, were ever ready
 to strengthen any prejudice the Queen
 might conceive against him. A thousand
 fears incident to age and decaying power
 were thus cherished in her, which magnified
 by passions time itself could never allay,
 might too probably stamp the base intelli-
 gence of Tiroen with the fatal authority of
 unbiassed truth, and give to the inactivity
 of Essex the appearance of treason.—
 Such a train of circumstances could
 hardly fail to stagger a mind in full
 possession of the noblest and most im-
 partial judgment; what then might we
 not fear from a Sovereign always influ-
 enced by prejudices each passing day
 strengthened, by insensibly impairing her
 reason? Fortunately, through an extrava-
 gance

grance of dotage which almost punished the errors of her youth, those prejudices had hitherto united in his favor:—yet while I perceived but a single chance against him, my soul shrunk from the idea of entrusting his life with her.

To give Lord Effex the opportunity of vindicating himself to Elizabeth, I resolved to account for her conduct; and divulged to him the inadvertent acknowledgment made by Tiroen, during our last memorable interview, of his own perfidy and dissimulation. A generous scarlet burnt on the cheek of Effex while he execrated the traitor; but struck immediately with a full conviction of the consequences that might result from this base intelligence, he suddenly formed the extraordinary resolution of returning to England to justify his honor.

This determination no less shocked than surprised me; far from imagining my information would lead to so wild a project, I rather supposed it would suggest to him the impossibility of ever revisiting England, unless the reduction of Ulster was fully accomplished. In truth, I dared
not

not confess my fears that even then to remain with the army alone could ensure his safety.—Every reason I could urge, or Southampton enforce, were however in his judgment feebler than his own—his honor was picqued, and nothing could hinder him from vindicating it.—Persuaded that a step as bold as this alone would convince Elizabeth of his innocence, and accustomed to regain, whenever he appeared, that influence over her, his enemies had often encroached on in his absence, he assured himself he need only be seen to triumph, and concluded a truce, as the preliminary to his departure.

The pride of sex, sensibility, and honor, contended with the leading passion of my nature, and taught me to disdain over-ruling him I could not convince:—nevertheless, I almost sunk under the conflict.—The frightful situation in which I had been placed since my arrival in Ireland, made me obstinately refuse to continue there whenever Essex should leave it; and the curiosity I had excited alike by my bold escape, and wound, made

it hazardous to commit me to the charge of any officer left behind. Surrounded with friends, relations, and dependents, Effex (such is the painful uncertainty ever attending on elevated rank) knew not one to whom he could safely intrust so delicate a care. The generous Southampton, determined to share the fate of his friend by accompanying him, proposed to unite that of his Lady with mine, by shipping us off ere they embarked, with servants they should mutually select; apparently bound for France, but in fact for the coast of Cumberland. In the most romantic and solitary part of that remote county the Wriothesleys had long owned a castle, where malice itself would hardly seek, and certainly never find us; there he assured Effex we might repose in peace, till they should return again to Ireland. I felt all the merit of this project, by which the amiable Southampton robbed himself of the dear society of his wife, merely to do honor to the beloved of his friend; and adopted it with the utmost

most eagerness, from the hope that if the busy transmitters of Lord Essex's actions had ever mentioned me, this total separation would extinguish all jealousy in the mind of Elizabeth; who I knew would much sooner overlook the loss of an army than his heart.

Although Essex knew not how to place me happily in Ireland, it was with pain he consented to my quitting it; but finding me obstinately partial to Lord Southampton's design, he proposed my resuming my masculine disguise, and selected a vessel whose captain was devoted to him, having ordered a lighter one to be prepared for himself.

So sad a presentiment shivered my soul on the morn appointed for our embarkation, that it was the utmost effort of my principles to suffer Essex to act in conformity to his. I had previously insisted that he should sail at the same moment with myself, to end my fears of that formidable savage Tiroen; and when he entered my chamber to conduct me to the ship, my heart

quivered on lips which had no longer the power to utter a syllable.—He besought, he conjured me, to support my sinking spirits : “the highest hopes,” he added, with an air of sincerity, “elevated his own ; that it had always been his pride, his pleasure, to deserve the distinctions lavished on him by the Queen ; and whatever views he had formed when heaven should call her hence, he could not resolve even by ingratitude, much less treachery, to shorten her days who had crowned his with glory. Doubt not,” concluded he, “my love, but I shall recover all my influence, and remember when next we meet it is to part no more.”

Ill-omened seemed that sentence to me—I fancied too his voice sounded hollow—I fancied !—alas, every dire chimaera sensibility presents to an impassioned heart, took full possession of mine ; yet, as to exert the least influence at so trying a moment was to render myself accountable for his future fate, I opposed every ennobling sentiment to an ungovernable passion,

passion, and heroically resigned him up to his duty.

We quitted the port at the same instant; he steering for that nearest the Irish coast, I for the North of England.—Both by consent remained on the deck with souls fixed on each other, till the beloved individual vanished, and the vessel seemed an object only less dear; that at length diminished to a cloud, the cloud shrunk to a speck, and the speck became invisible.—I threw myself on my bed, and, giving way to the tears I had hitherto stifled, I besought the Almighty to guard him he had so eminently distinguished.

Compassion had induced Essex to consent to our taking on board an old officer who had been desperately wounded. The intense sickness produced by the element, caused his wounds to open, which obliged us to put back and land him, or sacrifice his life to our convenience; and this unforeseen delay exposed us to a calamity as lasting as it was grievous.

Launched

Launched a second time on those restless surges to which alone I could compare my own perturbed soul, the next day brought the comparison still nearer—A dreadful tempest arose, nor were we within reach of any port. The enraged and howling winds drove the vessel at pleasure a thousand times sidelong into the deep, and the impetuous and foaming waves threw it up again with equal violence.——We remained stupified with terror; shut down with our women in the cabin, the rapid motions and cries of the seamen, the tremendous cracks and groans of the vessel, united with the warring elements to make that fate indifferent every moment brought nearer. To prepare my mind for the impending event, I, however recollected, with due gratitude to heaven, that the light vessel in which Essex sailed, had doubtless made a near port, ere the storm began, and landed him in safety.

I pondered once more on that wonderful character—I had so often considered. I saw, however strong the predominant
foible

foible of Lord Essex, it still gave way to rectitude; and fearful the passion which led him towards me might one day affect his safety, I bent to the awful God who thus in thunder called away its weak and helpless object; not without admiring the singularity of that destiny, which by interring me in the ocean, secured the forged death and funeral I had published for myself, from ever being discovered.

Strengthened, if not consoled, by these ideas, I sought to cheer my no less suffering friend; who rejecting alike food and comfort, resigned herself wholly up to sickness, faintings, and sorrow.—Ah, who shall say we suffer in vain! the feelings of the soul, like the organs of sight, gain strength by use, till we dare to analyze that fate we once could not have ventured to consider; while the refined and exquisite sense of mental anguish, which renders us superior to common evils, often gives an apparent sublimity to efforts which are little in our own estimation.—Lady Southampton, yet distinguished by nature, fortune, love, clung to those rich possessions,

sions, and shrunk from the awful immortality which threatened every moment to take place of them, while I, accustomed to calamity, saw in death only its termination.—She listened to me with wonder, and this instance of fortitude impressed her mind with a reverence for my character, time could never obliterate.

The sudden abatement of the storm contributed little to our safety; as the ship, ill calculated for such a conflict, had bulged upon a rock, and now filled so fast with water, that the utmost diligence of the crew could hardly save us from sinking.—The sight of land, ere the evening closed, had scarce power to cheer, for a moment, wretches who no more hoped to behold the dawning of the morn.—To the uproar and turbulence of the storm a silent horror and desolation had now succeeded scarce less shocking. Midnight was hardly turned ere a dismal universal cry informed us that the vessel was sinking—Lady Southampton threw her arms helplessly round me, and the unprin-

unprincipled part of the crew, bursting into our cabin, increased the horrors of the moment by opening our coffers, and gathering together their most valuable contents: an officer followed, who taking our hands in silence, led us toward the deck:—two boats were now preparing—the last melancholy hope we had of existence.—The captain, who happily owed every thing to Effex, informed us, that as the larger boat had the better chance, he had fixed on placing us in that, ere the scattered crew could collect, and by pressing too numerously, rob us of a last hope.—We were conveyed into the boat while he was yet speaking, but the sailors so impetuously followed, regardless of the captain's remonstrances and commands, that our danger seemed hardly diminished by the removal. —The change nevertheless encouraged each individual to an exertion from whence the general safety was ascertained. Entirely enveloped in the only watch-coat which had been taken from the wreck, Lady Southamp-

ton and myself (who were the only women saved) knew but by the voices of our companions whether life, or death, was to be expected—the sea ran high, and the grey dawn presented to our eager eyes a coast, which we were informed was that of Scotland, at no great distance; an old castle appeared, on a sharp projection of the land, whose solid battlements seemed proof against every attack of art and nature; but the shoals, rocks, and surf that intervened, threatened to make us never behold it at a hopeless distance, unless we could interest the compassion of its owners.

Every signal of distress was made for hours apparently in vain, till the turn of the tide; when two fishing boats appeared, slowly working their way towards us. A discordant shout of joy on the part of our companions split the ears of my sick friend and self, who only worshipped the power that preserved us.—The benevolent strangers approached, and their garb no less than unknown language pro-

proclaimed them natives of the Scotch coast. To the men around us they offered biscuits and whisky in abundance, and bestowed on me and Lady Southampton a draught of cold water, which seemed as much more refreshing as it was innocent.

Revived by this unexpected revolution in our fate, we by joint consent shook off the heavy watch-coat which had a little saved us from the incessant spray of the enraged sea, and when the boat was at length drawn towards the flight of rude steps leading to the castle, we both quitted it with no less celerity than thankfulness.— Our progress was for a moment impeded by surprise—at the gate of the castle stood two beings who seemed of some superior order; so strangely was I struck with their dress, beauty, and benevolence.— A youth and his sister waved us towards them with graceful courtesy—the latter wore a light vest and coat of Scots plaid, with a belt of green sattin clasped with gold; the rude wind had carried off the covering
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of her hair and caused her long auburn locks to stream on the bosom of the morning, exposing to view her slight ankles half booted, and tinging her cheeks with that pure cold colour, youth, health, innocence, and heaven, alone can give.—The youth, who in features strongly resembled his sister, was habited as a hunter, with a spear in his hand, and a dagger hanging in his belt.—Both with smiles of hospitality ran forward to receive us; and while the young lady took the arm of my friend, the youth with an impassioned pleasure shook my hand, casting a look of mingled wonder and disdain at the soiled, though rich, habiliments I had on; which indeed originally rather agreed with my own sex than that I intruded upon. The antique hall into which they conducted us, was hung with tattered banners, mouldy coats of arms, and every proud remnant of war and ancients. Refreshments suitable to our past distress were busily set before us, nor, with that intuitive politeness superior minds always possess,

possess, did either venture to express a curiosity till they had frankly satisfied ours.—From them we learnt that the spot fortune had thrown us upon, was an island on the coast of Scotland, and the place which sheltered us, Dornock Castle, held by the Laird of that name; that they were brother and sister to that Laird, who was now absent on a family concern of no small moment; in short, that their elder sister, Mabel, famed through the country for her beauty, having unhappily shewn it at Court, the King would not suffer her to return; and their brother, fearful she should yield to his licentious wishes, had hastened thither to claim her. The young people who made this artless recital, were formed to grace it—when the fair Phœbe spoke of the charms of her sister, her own were heightened by a softer, fuller bloom; and when she mentioned their dangerous effect, the proud blush of a generous shame gave manliness to the features of her brother Hugh.—Accustomed as my friend and self had long been to every worldly charm and

advantage, we saw in this remote spot, and these untutored children of nature, a simple and noble grace art only refines away.

When it came to my turn to narrate, I used every artifice to guard against the possibility of danger.—Adopting the name Lady Southampton had lately quitted, I called myself Vernon; a youth employed till lately as a page in the train of the Earl of Essex, and now his secretary—the lady, with me, I said, allied to the Earl of Southampton, was lately wedded to me; and both were following these noblemen when overtaken by the tempest which had thrown us upon their shore, and rendered us debtors to their humanity. Finding we came from the seat of war, and were conversant with the Court of England, they both asked a thousand various questions suitable to their sex, age, and simplicity, respecting the one and the other; and our descriptions comprised to them every charm of magnificence, glory, and gaiety.

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The happy device of a pretended marriage enabling me to share the chamber of Lady Southampton, we chose the hour of retirement to consider our present situation, and the mode most likely to restore us once more to the country and connections from which the storm had separated us. —My friend justly remarked, that the sailors wrecked with us, and its natives, were all the people likely to visit this remote and solitary isle, and that if we failed to take advantage of the departure of the first, we should throw ourselves wholly upon the generosity of the Laird of Dornock, of whose character we could not venture to decide from those of the amiable young people, who had so warmly embraced our cause.—After the application of Essex to my brother in my favour had been rejected, I had every thing to fear, if any circumstance should betray me into his power, and the strictest secrecy on our names and condition alone could give us a hope of liberty;—how under such restrictions we could clearly

explain our present situation to the two noblemen whom alone it concerned, neither of us could discover; nevertheless, necessity obliged us to come to some resolution; and persuaded that the writing of each would be known to him to whom the letter was addressed, weary as we both were, a part of the night was spent in preparing two epistles for the sailors to convey.—The morning came, and with it the mortifying information that we were a few hours too late; the men saved with us having hired a fishing smack in which they sailed away at the turn of the tide: nor did its owner know their destination till the vessel returned. I was not without an idea that our youthful protectors had voluntarily concealed so material an event in the hope of detaining us; but certainly had that really been the case, it was not half so inexcusable as our own imprudence and neglect.—We hired a boat to pursue them with the letters, but after several days spent in painful expectation, the packets were returned to us, with

with the mortifying information that all inquiry had proved fruitless. We had now no resource but in the generosity of the Laird of Dornock, and endeavoured to fortify ourselves with patience to wait his return.

The youthful brother and sister expressed a generous concern for our situation; but wholly without power, they could do no more.—Prisoners at large, as we were, effectually bounded by the roaring ocean, and depending solely on contingencies for freedom, the days to us crept heavily away—I sometimes remembered with a sigh that I was in Scotland—in the kingdom where by inheritance I might claim a rank that would enable me to decide my own fate, had not a combination of events, fore-running even my birth, made every advantage of fortune and nature alike useless to me. I endeavoured to discover the real character of their King, but even from the report of his friends, to be able to term it good, I was obliged to think it weak; and in

that case knew he would inevitably be surrounded with artful politicians ready to profit by his foible; in short, I found that, however near he and I were allied in blood, we were born to be distinct beings in creation, and to meet would endanger the safety of the weaker. When I turned my anxious soul toward England, it brought me no relief.—As far from the reach of intelligence as if in the wilds of Arabia, I in vain sought to discover the reception Essex had met with at Court.—That name, which in the vanity of my heart I often thought the world resounded with, I found, with checked pride, was scarcely known in an adjacent country, till my lips so often repeated it; and even when most anxious to oblige me, those of others only echoed the sound so dear, so beloved! I had but too much reason to fear doubts of my safety would make him careless of his own, and often would have resigned every brilliant prospect fancy ever spread before me, to ascertain the life of the Earl.

Too

Too late I regretted the pride of heart which had made me resist the desire I felt to detain him in Ireland; and could not but acknowledge it was rather that than principle which reconciled me to his departure; yet in a situation so delicate as ours, to wish was to command; and the sacrifice his own soul did not dictate, mine disdained to suggest.

My mind now daily passed through such a chaos of ideas and emotions, as would have prevented the time from appearing tedious, had not its prolongation been the origin of most of them.

Often sitting on the rude battlements of the castle, while the surges beat against their base, have I tuned the lute of Phœbe, and while she warbled a few wild airs of inconceivable melody in a language unknown to me, my full soul has wept over the mysterious fate of my sister.—Ah, how easy is it to be unknown!—to be entombed alive!—If I, even in a civilized adjacent kingdom, in effect the country of all my ancestors, can be thus

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helpless,

helpless, what may the poor Matilda have been?——Turn, busy imagination, from the fatal supposition.

The oversight we had committed in suffering the sailors to leave us, became every day more and more regretted.—Lady Southampton soon found herself in a situation that required the tenderest indulgence, and would forbid removal; even if our asylum should be traced by anxious love. We spent our lives in fretting, and had we not possessed an unlimited intimacy, I know not how we should have endured the incessant chagrin.—Deprived even of the usual resources; a scanty library, a lute, some rustic airs, and a pedigree as old as the creation, bounded the possessions and knowledge of our young friends, and could not add anything to our own.

The Laird of Dornock, however, returned at last.—Ah, how unlike his gentle kindred!—phlegmatic, self-willed, crested, and imperious, his aspect presented a correspondent harshness; and we instantly felt it vain to rest a hope on his friend-

friendship : he no doubt reproved his brother and sister for having lived on such familiar terms with strangers, avowedly subordinate ; and though he often made us sensible our company was a burthen, he took not a single step to relieve himself from it. Phœbe had begun to improve herself in music ere his arrival ; it was his pleasure that she should continue to do so ; but his presence threw a coldness and constraint over the whole party, which made what I had once thought a relief, an inconceivable toil. The ingenuous noble girl saw her brother's insolence with a grief which prevented her from profiting by the lessons so much desired—her gushing tears would often relax the strings of her lute, while low-warbling tales of hopeless love, and her sad eyes fix themselves on mine with an expression too strong to be misunderstood. I perceived while unconscious of the danger, because possessed with the remembrance of my own disguise, that I had won the gentle heart I only sought to form.—Circumstanced as I was, this could not but be

be a dangerous acquisition ; and by a fatality yet more alarming, her elder brother soon after became enamoured of Lady Southampton ; nor did he conceal that inclination—he had from his arrival regarded me with an eye that indicated doubt on the subject of our marriage ; but the increasing size of my friend, and our habit of living together, appeared to controvert a suspicion which nevertheless remained in his mind.

Anxious to profit by the only hour in the day which could favor his views, he was obliged to give the advantage he sought, and permit me to teach his sister with no other guard than his younger brother, Hugh, while he passed the interval with Lady Southampton.—All equally rejoiced at an incident all had equally desired ; as to myself, determined from the moment I had been convinced of the passion of the fair Phœbe, to seize the first opportunity of intrusting her with my disguise, ere shame for the mistake should disgust her with the object, I was not sorry to confide it to
her

her younger brother : as, if it did not more attach him to my interest, it would at least obviate every fear he might entertain on his sister's account, whom he could then safely leave at any time. This just candor produced more consequences than one. The sweet Phœbe started, blushed, and first lifting her swimming eyes toward heaven, she then covered them with her hands—when I ceased to speak she timorously raised them to my face.—“ Ah ! why had you not been thus sincere at first ?” cried the generous girl, “ the power was then in our hands—*now*”—she shook her head, and in that emphatic gesture strongly finished her imperfect speech. Alarmed and anxious, I conjured her to confide to me those reasons which made our situation in her opinion so hopeless. She could not resist my entreaties ; and at length acknowledged, “ that from the moment her elder brother returned, Hugh no less than herself had observed a haughtiness and severity in his air and language more forbidding than usual ; at
last

last they had discovered that their sister, Mabel, far from listening to virtue and the Laird of Dornock, had yielded to the King; and to protect herself from her family, had been compelled to publish her shame, by claiming her royal lover's protection. To reconcile the Laird of Dornock to so cutting a disgrace, a title had been offered him, with any post about the Court he should fix on : and that at length the fair Mabel had consoled herself for the forfeiture of every rational distinction, by the temporary honor of reigning in the heart of her King, and being called a Countess." I inquired with surprise, how an event should affect us in which we apparently had no concern ? Hugh answered, " that his brother, far from accepting the splendid coverings offered for infamy, had retired from Court in great indignation ; that at first they had both been compelled to scorn and return every letter and present sent by their sister : yet of late some view, inexplicable to them, had made a singular alteration in the Laird of Dornock's sentiments.—

ments.—Several couriers had been dispatched by him to the favorite Countess, but that neither their commissions, nor the answers, ever transpired ; yet many circumstances had given them reason to conclude that our pacquets had never been forwarded, as we were taught to believe.—I changed colour at the idea of this deliberate treachery, thanking heaven I alone had been informed of it ; as Lady Southampton, often unable to govern her feelings, by some imprudent speech would infallibly have betrayed her knowledge of it. The young Hugh, observing my uneasiness, assured me, “ though hopeless of finding a faithful messenger, he held himself answerable for the release of those whom he had contributed to enthrall, and that I might depend upon his own services if I would deign to confide in him, nor should we be suspected as the causes of his disappearance, since the Laird of Dornock well knew his sister Mabel’s particular fondness for him, and would naturally imagine that he was determined to profit by

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the high favor she held at Court."—— Is there a charm on earth so touching as generosity?—— The noble youth paused with an air that indicated his ardent desire of having his offer accepted, lest it should be mistaken for a vaunt. I took a hand of each young friend, and returning acknowledgments suitable to the occasion, declined embroiling them with their fallen brother; who could not want power to render our situation much more intolerable, if once he suspected us of alienating his family from their duty.—I persuaded them, as well as myself, that our own friends would with unwearied diligence search us out the moment they discovered that any part of the crew survived the wreck; of which the Captain would certainly inform them, unless he sunk with the ship.

Yet day after day proved this hope vain and fallacious.—A dreary winter passed away in this remote Castle, through every aperture of which the keen and howling wind poured unrestrained; and the wild
ocean

ocean swelled with frequent storms, while our affrighted senses often mistook the roar of the tempest for the groans of the dying.

I had almost ceased to hope, when one day, while our host was hunting, I wandered to the battlements as usual, and descried from thence a small vessel approaching, better built, and more clean, than those I was accustomed to see ; as it drew nearer the land, I perceived English dresses.—My heart took the alarm, I leant impatiently forward, straining the keen sense whose imperfection I complained of.—The boat drew near. I discerned the regimental of Essex ; I gave a groan of exquisite delight, and reeling forward, should have plunged into the ocean, had not the young Hugh, who stood behind, held me fast.—The officer looked up, and I instantly perceived him to be Henry Tracey, the favorite aid-de-camp of Lord Essex, once before deputed in search of me.—Disappointment mingled with the various and interesting emo-

emotions of the moment.—I pointed to the stranger, sighed, and fainted away.

They bore me to Lady Southampton, who thunderstruck at seeing me lifeless, and unable to guess the cause, seemed little better herself. Hugh, who clearly comprehended from my impassioned gesture, how interesting the arrival of the stranger was to me, hastened to bring him to our apartment, while yet his brother was absent; when instantly retiring, he left us full liberty——“Tracey?” cried both of us at once, “Effex?” “Southampton?” echoed each heart, “sum up all in a word.”—“They live,” returned he, “and need only behold you to be happy.”—“Ah, gracious heaven!” cried I, lifting my eyes thither, while I presented my heart with my hand to the faithful messenger, “receive my transport; we now can breathe freely; give us the relief of knowing the events which followed the dangerous voyage of Effex and Southampton.” “I should hardly dare to do so, had I not first assured you of their safety,” resumed Tracey, “for
forrow

orrow I see has been preying already on your bloom ; it would not perhaps have been more spared had you passed this trying interval in London."

Apprehensive every moment of an interruption from the Laird of Dornock, we besought the worthy Tracey to dispense with all preface, and hasten his recital.

"With terror and anxiety," continued he, "I followed my Lord into the vessel selected to convey him home, nor were these emotions diminished when I perceived the Lord Deputy full of fits of doubt and reflection, which at times were obvious even to himself ; often would he affect to drown them in gay society and wine, and, for the first time in his life, he assumed a false bravery.—At the hours of retirement, far from indulging that intimacy so long established between him and Lord Southampton, of which I had sometimes been a grateful and humble partaker, he sunk into an absence of mind, and total silence, no less alarming to his beloved friend than myself ; in effect, that Nobleman saw that he had *set his fer-*
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tune on a cast, and he would stand the hazard of the die,' as I conjectured by his turning to me one day, and by an expressive motion of his head, leading mine towards the side of the vessel, where the General leant; his thoughtful countenance apparently fixed on those rolling waves which yet perhaps he saw not.—

“All is not well in the heart of thy Lord, Tracey,” said his noble friend; then pausing a moment, he added, in a lower tone, “Ah Effex, *aut Cæsar, aut nullus!*” The Lord Deputy happily advanced, and saved me the necessity of corroborating sentiments it gave me pain to adopt.

It was not with the customary greetings we beheld the pleasant shores of our native country—doubt and anxiety had thrown a gloom over those lively and spontaneous emotions, which often suspend even the sense of suffering. Lord Effex lost not a moment, but posted toward the Court, with such expedition, that he outwent all information, and was his own harbinger.—We arrived one morning ere yet

yet the Queen had left her chamber; but alas, it was no longer the Court we had left—every face around appeared strange to us; and we saw too plainly that the invidious Cecils reigned there triumphant. Lord Grey, a favorite of theirs, presumed to pass the Earl of Essex without notice—that Nobleman gave him only an eye-beam, and hastened on to decide his fate.—Form was annihilated by circumstances, and he rushed into the presence of Elizabeth the moment his arrival was announced:—accustomed to behold him with complacency, to receive him with kindness, the Queen yielded through surprise to the habits of so many years, and granted the private audience he requested.—She listened to a vague and weak vindication of his conduct in Ireland, and the dotage of her soul was perhaps transiently gratified with the idea, that he had preferred the recovery of her affection to that of his reputation in arms. After a long conference, the Earl rejoined his friends; pride and pleasure

had flushed his cheek, and the idea of re-assuming his accustomed influence, diffused through his mien that benignity and graciousness which are at once its nature and its charm. Resentment and rage never constituted any part of his character, but at the moment he suffered by those passions: such galling sensations were already forgotten.—Overwhelmed with the congratulations of his friends; encircled even by his overawed enemies, the heroic Essex rose above the triumph he could not but desire—every face was instantaneously changed, and those who knew not an hour before whether they should recollect him, now with fervile adulation hallowed his very footsteps.—This fatal interval of short-lived power was, however, the last heaven allowed him.—The crafty Cecils and their faction seized the moment he injudiciously quitted the Queen, to persuade her that this indulged favorite had not only acted contrary to his commission in venturing to return himself, but that he had brought home with him all his chosen ad-

adherents, as well as every aspiring spirit likely to strengthen his sway, and circumscribe hers.—They touched the soul of Elizabeth where it was most vulnerable, and having thus opposed to each other the two leading weaknesses of her nature, by throwing the weight of party into the one scale, it soon preponderated. She was unhappily in that declining age which renders every human being in some degree capricious and timid.—Already tinged with fear, she soon yielded to the various informations officiously brought her by factious confederates.—She was told on all hands that Lord Essex was holding a Court even in her Palace, and insolent and daring as this conduct could not but appear, it was of less consequence than the unbounded influence he ever maintained over the people—an influence he would more than recover the moment he was seen in London. “For *themselves* they heeded not—willing martyrs to their integrity and fealty ; but for their Queen, they all trembled at the prospect.”—It was

too hazardous to be risked by Elizabeth ; fear and resentment conquered the tender prepossession which still struggled faintly at her heart, and she determined to ascertain her own safety, as well as that of her kingdom, by imprisoning her favorite ; nor is this resolution to be wondered at, since even her love conduced to it, when irritated by the imaginary sting of ingratitude. She had set Lord Essex up in early youth as an idol for her own heart to worship ; but he was not born to be satisfied with unmerited admiration——the more he acquired the more he sought to deserve ; till having established his favor on innate nobleness, he rose above partial distinction, leaving her to lament at leisure the very elevation she had given. From this period she had been weak and irresolute in every instance where he was concerned ; at intervals lavishing honors to which he had no title ; at others, withholding advantages he had fairly won. The motive of this inconsistency he could not fail to discern, but persuaded an attach-

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achment which thus powerfully coped with her judgment, was unconquerable, he forgot that she was sinking fast into the vale of years, when the noblest passions insensibly condense into self-love.

You who so well know the heart of my Lord, Madam," cried Tracey, turning to me, "will better imagine than I can describe, his deep sense of an indignity entirely public; and apparently premeditated. — So unexpected a manœuvre mastered his judgment, and giving way to the most passionate extremes, he drew his sword, and would have returned it by her messenger, beseeching her "to reward his services by adding a more decisive blow to that she once before bestowed on him, since both seemed to him less shocking and ignominious than such open and unmerited contumely."——In vain his friends sought to moderate his wrath; in vain his enemies drew near, eager to catch and treasure the rash expressions he should unwarily utter, and convert them to his ruin.—Touched on

the tenderest point, his honor, the world combined would have wanted power to silence him—he gave full scope to his indignant and wounded feelings, and with a severity of truth more galling and dangerous than the greatest exaggerations, declared aloud, “that the Queen had out-lived all her nobler faculties, and that her soul was grown as crooked as her body.” This cutting sarcasm was too faithfully conveyed to Elizabeth, who regardless of his pride while her own was thus wounded, committed him to the charge of the Lord Keeper, whose house was in effect his prison.

Oh heavens! what wild vicissitudes, what transports of passion took possession of my Lord, at recollecting the imprudent readiness with which he had delivered himself helpless and unguarded into the hands of his enemies! struggling like a lion in the toils, every vein would sometimes swell almost to madness, nor dared I leave him a moment alone.

I had no other hope of assuaging his irritated passions, than by recalling to his
mind

mind the beloved image of the fair voyager, to whom the news of this event, and the fear of what might follow it, would be little less than death. I averted one storm however only to give free passage to another; the tear of tenderness proudly trembled on the burning cheek of anger, and a grief it split my heart to behold, took possession of his.—“ Spare me the killing remembrance,” he would cry—“ disgraced—defamed—imprisoned; how shall I ever lift my eyes to that fair, that noble sufferer? I tell thee, Tracey, rather would I have died than known this shameful moment.”——Impressed by the unwearied attachment I had ever shewn him, and overweighed by the sense of his own situation, my Lord at length condescended to lighten his own heart by unfolding to me its dearest views; well he knew they would never pass beyond mine—no, every vein of it should crack ere I would wrong so generous a confidence, which I acknowledge but to prove my fate wholly dependant on the Noble-
man

man I serve: I would have it so, and heaven could afflict me only by separating them.

The faithful Lord Southampton was his daily visitant: though not himself a prisoner, the consciousness that every action of his life was watched and reported, bound that nobleman to a most cautious observance. The Cecils had now no wish ungratified, for the imprudent bitterness of Lord Essex had supplied the only fuel to the Queen's resentment which could long keep it alive; nor did time, in cooling the passions of my Lord, incline him to submission—convinced in his own mind that he was the injured person, reflection only settled rage into disgust and contempt; nevertheless, his constitution suffered severely by this variety of passions; when one seized upon it, which annihilated all the rest, and completely undermined his health—a grief more touching than glory or ambition could occasion suddenly subdued him.—The time was now come which ought to have brought to him and Lord Southampton the welcome

come

come assurance that the partners of their souls were safe in Cumberland—the time was come I say!—alas, it was gone!—Afraid to communicate to each other a terror which preyed alike on both, Lord Southampton dispatched express upon express in vain.—The days that lingered so tediously away, however, matured doubt into certainty. Lord Effex no longer contended with the nervous fever which obliged him to take to his bed; where reaching out a languid hand to his overpowered friend, he broke, at last, the fearful heavy silence. “They are gone, for ever gone, my dear Southampton,” cried he, in the low accent of incurable despair; “heaven has spared to souls so gentle and susceptible those trials our stouter minds can perhaps better contend with.—Oh, thou dear one! yet do I regret that this bosom did not receive thy last sighs! that entombed with thee even in the ocean, death had not consummated a union fortune ever frowned on—but I hasten impatiently to rejoin thee, oh Ellinor! my first, my only love!”

The killing remembrance which distracted his mind soon rendered a malady, slight at first, desperate; he was even given over; the Queen for a long time withstood the accounts given by his friends of his situation, so deeply had his enemies impressed her with the idea that this was only a refined artifice to tempt her to humiliate herself. Nevertheless, by one of those passionate emotions with which nature sometimes overreaches the most elaborate finesses of art, she suddenly determined to ascertain his real situation, by sending her own physician to visit him.—The report of that gentleman convinced her of its danger—he was ordered to watch over the Earl with the most anxious care; and even to hint to him that every distinction would be restored with his health.—But, alas! sympathy itself had no longer any charms for him, and the presence of Lord Southampton seemed the only relief his fate admitted. That amiable Nobleman, no less sensible of the mutual calamity than

his

his friend, had not the same reasons to bury his affliction in silence.—Repeated messengers were sent alike to Cumberland, and the port you embarked from, ladies: those who returned from the latter only confirmed the fears which had hitherto fluctuated—they informed the lover and the husband, that the wife of the Captain mourned for him as dead, nor was it doubted but that the crew and passengers were alike victims to a storm so sudden and tremendous. The active and enlivened soul frequently exhausts its most acute sensations by anticipation.—Certainty could not add to the grief occasioned by surmise; and the extinguished hopes of the friends gave them alike up to that cold and sullen despair, which is the worst of all states, because frequently incurable. Those late hopes the Queen was willing to revive her dying favorite with, made not the least impression on him; and the Cecils learnt with surprise, that, neither their views, their conduct, nor even his own disgraceful

ful imprisonment, any longer touched Lord Essex; nay, that not even his recovery was able to revive those habits of enterprize the world were taught to think hitherto uncontrollable. His friends, on the contrary, blest the skilful physician who prolonged a life so valuable, and saw with the happiest hopes, that those romantic flights in his character his enemies had almost wrought up to his ruin, were at once extinguished; leaving it without any other distinction than a melancholy sweetness which rather turned his thoughts toward philosophy than war. The people, ever naturally disposed to side with the unfortunate, cried out, that he was the innocent victim of the Cecil party; who by some odious strokes of policy, added popularity to their depressed rival, in diminishing their own——Elizabeth herself could no longer support the idea that the man she still loved was obscurely breaking his heart, while yet in the flower of youth, in an unmerited and disgraceful prison.—She yielded to the information of
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the physician that my Lord's amending health required air, and sent him her permission to retire to any of his seats in the country; but forbade him to attempt appearing in her presence: a restriction perhaps more agreeable to Lord Effex, than herself, could she have seen the desolate situation of mind in which he departed.

From the country he addressed a letter of thanks to the Queen, which displayed at once his eloquence, gratitude, and languor: in truth, the latter gained ground daily in his character. Lord Effex was born capable of uniting in his person every various and generous pursuit, had fortune allowed it, but not even he was equal to living without one.—I frequently trembled at beholding his gloom and inanity. Wholly withdrawn from the sphere in which he had hitherto moved, and the pleasures he had once enjoyed, the rude society of his neighbours, and the boisterous amusements the country afforded, rather offended, than employed an enlightened and susceptible heart. He wandered

dered all day in the woods alone, and returned every evening spent and unrefreshed, only to recover animal strength enough to enable him to pass the morrow in the same melancholy manner.

In this situation I fancied a false hope could not add to his danger, and might perhaps rouse those active faculties every hour seemed more and more to absorb. I one day ventured to repeat to him an imaginary dream, tending to prove that you still existed.—Not even the firmest mind can resist the subtle attacks of superstition when labouring under depression.—His soul so eagerly adopted the fiction of my brain, that I was a thousand times tempted to acknowledge it to be such, but dared not venture to shew him I had played upon his wounded feelings. Revived with the most vague and distant hope, he impatiently drove me away on a search my own soul foreboded to be fruitless. I even debated after I set out, whether I should not loiter out the appointed time in England till I could decently return from my

my imaginary peregrination, when a dream, more pointed and singular than that I had feigned, awakened in myself those hopes I had communicated to my Lord, and led me from isle to isle enquiring for you : but I will not call it a dream, since surely the event proves it a visitation.— Oh, gracious God ! what joy will my return pour into the hearts that now ach for either ! How pure will be the satisfaction derived from their acknowledgments !”

During this long recital, my tumultuous feelings pursued my love through every desperate situation.—My woe-struck heart hardly dared to breathe, till finding him at last free and well, it gave a deep sigh, and respired without pain. Effex insulted, endangered, imprisoned :——I cast my eyes round those gloomy walls, I so late thought my prison, and raising them to heaven, adored the power who there confined me, unconscious of the conflicts I could not have supported. Ah, Effex ! what were the warring elements, the midnight

wreck, the long, long solitude, the dire uncertainty I had so bitterly bewailed, to the single idea of seeing thee one moment at the mercy of Elizabeth, one moment in the power of thy enemies! And yet, for me thy generous soul lost all sense of even these inflictions; pride, vanity, and grandeur, in vain assailed thee: a true and noble passion beat unalterably at thy heart, condensing in one favorite sorrow, those mighty powers, which once fulfilled every various and active duty of humanity.

But this was not a time for impassioned reveries. Lady Southampton recalled my attention to the present moment; and we employed it in informing Tracey of the name, character, and situation, we had thought it prudent to assume, as well as those of our host. Scarce was he master of these important particulars, ere the Laird of Dornock returned, and broke in upon us with an abruptness and anger he took no pains to disguise. The sight of an English officer

officer a little abated his wrath. Tracey, according to the plan we had agreed on, called Lady Southampton his sister, and, with every testimony of gratitude for the hospitable shelter our host had so long given us, offered a recompense still more agreeable; with which happily he had had the forecast to provide himself.—While the Scot stood irresolute respecting his answer, the wary Tracey turned to us, and, in an authoritative voice, said, he must answer to the Queen for his absence, did it exceed the appointed time; and therefore, we must quickly take leave of our friends, and hasten our departure for England. This decisive speech increased the perturbation and disappointment already obvious in the features of our host; nevertheless, our going was to him so unforeseen an event, that, not being able to find a sufficient reason for detaining us, he tacitly consented to it.

My heart bounded at the unhopèd-for liberation, and I would have sailed that moment, despite of wind and tide; but,

as the sailors declared this impossible, our departure was delayed till the next morning. Whether the various incidents of the day accelerated the hour appointed by nature, or that Lady Southampton, contrary to her own idea, had reached it, I know not; but she was seized at midnight, with the pains of labour, and suffered so severely, that her life was despaired of. In the course of the ensuing day she was delivered of a dead child, and I was obliged to console myself for the long delay this event must necessarily occasion, by the pleasing idea that the partner of my fate was not prematurely divided from it—in truth her vexation was so great, that I was reduced to stifle my own, lest I should contribute to her illness.

The fate which hope yet gilds, though but from the verge of the horizon, is never quite insupportable. We found, in the protection of Tracey, and the idea of rejoining the world, to which he seemed our immediate link, the means of beguiling many a tedious hour; nor was this

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this consolation superfluous ; for the Laird of Dornock became, from the moment of Tracey's arrival, more fullen and impenetrable than ever.—Self was, in him, the prevailing principle. Early invested with that bounded, but absolute, authority, which oftener produces and shelters tyranny, than a more extensive field of action, he had hitherto known no opposition.—How often has a blind passion warped the noblest natures ! nor was it perhaps unnatural that he should stretch his prerogative, to retain in his hands a lovely and beloved woman, over whom he could claim no right.—Long inured to fear, suspicion, and anguish, they readily returned to their throbbing habitation, my heart. I often fancied I read murder written in dark, but legible lines, on the knit brow of our host ; and though Tracey slept only in an outer chamber close by us, scarce could I persuade myself that he was suffered to rest peaceably there, or yet lived for our protection : nevertheless, I strove at times to reject those black chimeras a lively imagination perhaps too readily adopted.

The Laird of Dornock no longer interfered with us, or our fate; neither did he withhold from us the company of his sister.—That sweet girl, new to society, with a romantic happiness peculiar to youth, gifted every object with her own graces and virtues: impressed at once with the merit of Tracey, she transferred to a heart which could deserve it the passion I had unwarily inspired, nor was her second choice unpropitious. Tracey, whose soul had expanded in a camp, was yet to learn the inconceivable charm of love: it took full possession of him. With a sweet, though sad pleasure, I witnessed pure and innocent vows, which continually reminded me of those days, when like Phœbe, I looked enraptured on the varied landscape of life, yet glowing with the early beams of hope; unconscious of the showers which often would fall, the heavy nights which must wholly obscure it. Tracey, no less delighted than his mistress, no longer hastened his departure to England, and looked
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astonished that we did not find every charm of existence in this dismal exile.

I, however, anxiously waited, with Lady Southampton, for the day when her recovered health should enable us to depart.—It came at length, and we were eagerly preparing for the voyage, when the Laird of Dornock sent us an order to read, by which the King of Scots impowered him to detain us. I know not any shock, of all fate had imposed on me, I ever felt more sensibly: nevertheless, I had presence of mind enough to observe, by the date of this order, that it had been obtained during the confinement of my friend. The disappointment and despair this incident occasioned, was only alleviated by the recollection that in abusing the authority of the King, to indulge an unworthy inclination, the Laird of Dornock had made himself responsible to the laws of his country for our safety, by admitting that such persons were in his custody. Tracey gave him notice of this immediately; and though he moderated his rage in

consideration of the fair Phœbe, he warned the Laird of Dornock to treat us nobly, as he would answer it to his own King, and the Queen of England, in whose name we should soon be demanded. To this indignant vaunt, for in truth it was no better, the haughty Scot coldly answered, “that he should take his chance of incurring an old woman’s anger, who perhaps had already resigned all her rights to his master.” Tracey could no longer controul the feelings of his generous soul, and replied with acrimony. The Laird of Dornock bade him profit by the occasion, and be gone immediately, if he did not mean to be included among the prisoners. There wanted only this stroke to consummate our wretchedness, and, however reluctantly we resigned our only friend and protector, Lady Southampton joined me in urging him to go : till, over-ruling all his objections, we hastened him alone into a bark, which an hour before we seemed to see ourselves in. He comforted us
with

with the assurance of soon returning, being fully persuaded the King of Scots would never authorize so unjust and illegal a procedure, when once the whole circumstance was impartially stated to him. I sighed, at remembering I knew him better; but as an explanation at that moment was vain, I urged not the unbounded influence of the fair Mabel, through whose illicit connection with the King this order had doubtless been obtained. How indeed should that Monarch be convinced of a remote act of injustice, who even at the moment of committing it, was wronging every moral and religious duty? The man who once voluntarily errs, must either be weak or vicious; in the first instance, he resigns himself up to the passions of others, in the latter to his own; and in either case scarce ever recovers the narrow but even boundary of virtue.

It was not by such means I hoped for freedom—ah, no! my views all pointed toward the lover to whom my heart, like the
needle

needle ever vibrated, though far divided. —Let Effex be once informed, sighed I— let him once know where to find me, and he would cross the globe to ensure my safety. When the chagrin of this trying moment abated, I called to mind the infinite relief the visit of Tracey had given our spirits, and the change it had made in our situation, by acquitting us of those petty obligations which always humiliate a noble mind, unless it finds a congenial one in the bestower.

I soon observed that the Laird of Dornock had not courage to profit by the base injustice he had committed. The subservient situation Tracey had placed himself in, whenever we were present, and the profound deference with which he obeyed our every wish, neither agreeing with the rank we avowed, nor the regimental he wore, a vague idea of mystery had taken possession of our host's mind, which wanted vigor and activity to attempt developing it. Conscious too late, that he had, in releasing Tracey, set a spy on his own conduct,

conduct, he vainly regretted the timidity which prevented his detaining him. He nevertheless, at intervals, still talked of love to Lady Southampton, offering to buy a return by imaginary worlds of wealth : for to us, accustomed to elegance and luxury, all his possessions appeared but a gaudy poverty. As these ostentatious and absurd offers were one day made in my presence, I could not but take some notice of them ; he silenced me however, by replying, that I must be cautious how I exerted a spirit so likely to make him transfer his attachment, and be satisfied with protecting one of the two ; since I could neither think so ill of his discernment, or my own beauty, as to believe him the dupe of my disguise. As it was the first time a doubt on the subject had ever transpired, my confusion gave him a full conviction : I could not recover myself sufficiently to reply for some moments : at length I told him that he had guessed the only part of our secret which did not lie too deep for his knowledge ;

ledge; nevertheless, that all he had discovered, was but the least part of the mystery; and finally that the day which informed him of our names and rank, would call him to a severe account, if his conduct were in the least unworthy either of us or himself.—I boldly added, that the only thing ever wanting to our safety, was, to have the Court of England informed of our asylum, and now that was by Tracey's means ascertained, we were not without noble friends to claim us. The grandeur of the air natural to me when insult roused my pride, astonished and awed the Laird of Dornock; his mind laboured with vague and indistinct apprehensions; and as all attempts at diving into a secret locked up solely in the hearts interested in retaining it, must be vain, he half repented having exerted an unjustifiable influence, he could no longer hope to profit by.

Lady Southampton acknowledged her obligations to my firmer spirit; and both having no farther reason to affect subordination, resumed the habits of rank and

and distinction; hiring domestics of our own till the moment of enfranchisement should arrive.

Heartily weary of us both, I often thought the Laird of Dornock meditated proposing to release us; and while I was one day insensibly guiding him to that wished-for point, an order from Court was delivered into his hand. Convinced that it would liberate us, I cast an eye of triumph on him, while he opened it; and saw his countenance confess the same idea; but a moment caused a visible change in it. He read the order aloud, and we found with inexpressible astonishment, that it contained the strictest charge to guard his English prisoners, as he would answer it to his King: yet with all due deference.—I eagerly caught at this article, without seeming to notice the first, which nevertheless sunk deep into my heart; nor was his insensible to the latter.—The feariness and disgust he had begun to indulge, increased; and his pride revolting at the idea that his castle was become a state prison, and himself only a jailor,

jailor, he felt every way irritated, humiliated, and offended. No human being submits to power with so ill a grace as the man who has unjustifiably exerted it; and when its restrictions fall heavily on such mere retribution becomes in effect a severe revenge.

A tedious interval had again elapsed without any news from England. The tender, timid Phœbe often persuaded herself that her lover had never reached it; and the singularity of finding ourselves apparently forgotten, sometimes inclined my friend and self to unite with her in that opinion—yet, how many other causes might we reasonably assign for the neglected—causes, so much more afflicting, that recalled our thoughts to the isle for consolation.

Whether the infinite variety, the eternal transitions my own life had already afforded, inclined me to hope on; or whether the incessant prayers I addressed to him who alone could relieve me, subdued my mind with fortitude, I cannot say; but, I certainly daily discovered in it a re-

sources hitherto unknown. Every passing hour seemed to refine and settle its powers and perceptions, till those turbulent passions, which of late rushed like a cataract through my frame, now, with a gentle, healthful current, gave motion to my pulses.

We learnt from Phœbe, that many letters came from Mabel to her elder brother, the contents of which he so cautiously concealed, as made it obvious we were their subject. This news only confirmed us in the belief that Tracey had reached England safely; and afforded us at the same time the flattering idea, that our friends were anxiously labouring to recover us; however their progress might be impeded by obstacles, we could neither guess at, nor decide upon: nor were these suppositions vain. An order at length arrived that we should be delivered to the officer who should present its counter-part. Oh, what joy, what gratitude, what anxiety, did this prospect of a deliverance afford us! From the dawn of the morning till night blackened the ocean, did one or the other watch

watch with eager expectation the promised vessel.—We beheld it at last, and hardly could Effex himself have been more welcome to my eyes.

Tracey once more landed, and glad was the greeting on all sides.—He presented each of us letters—dear and precious characters! my soul poured through my eyes when I again beheld them! With lavish tenderness Effex hailed my second resurrection, and vowed to shew his sense of the blessing by an implicit submission to my will.—“You shall no more complain of the terrors of a camp, my love,” continued he; “I turn for ever from the bloody scene.—A court no longer has any charms for me: inspired with juster sentiments, alive to purer pleasures, in your heart and my own will I henceforth look for the wayward straggler, happiness. I am no longer, my sweet Ellinor, the Effex you have known! I am become an absolute rustic, a mere philosopher. With you I will abjure the world, and in some solitary spot, devote myself to love and the sciences. Oh
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thut your heart, like me, my love, to the past, and look only towards the future. I wait with impatience the news of your safe arrival in Cumberland, and date from that day our happiness."

These words were to my soul, what the balmy breath of spring is to the frozen earth: the winds at once cease to blow, the snow sinks into her bosom, the buds put forth their verdure, and nature forgets she has suffered.

Tracey came fraught with gifts rather suited to the spirit of the donor, than that of the accepter; yet, they opened the heart of the Laird of Dernock, who listened to the avowal of Tracey's love without repugnance; and at length promised him his sister, if, at the expiration of two years, his rank in the army entitled him to claim her.—The tears of the young lovers for ever cemented those vows his will thus authorized. Joy having disposed my heart to receive the soft impressions of every gentle passion, extinguishing all that were not so, I re-

membered, with astonishment, the moment when I readily adopted the ambitious projects of Essex.—Rank, riches, glory, what are ye?—Gay ornaments which lend splendor indeed to felicity, but which only incumber and weigh down the soul when struggling with the waves of misfortune : gladly we lighten ourselves of such adventitious goods, and grasp in tranquillity and love, the unenvied, but rich essence of all our fortune.

In life, as in prospects, we can long enjoy only a bounded view ; and all which present, either to the mind or eye, a multiplicity of objects, however great or beautiful, overstrain the faculties, and destroy the pleasure. Rejecting at once every gaude vanity delights in, from the distant throne, and the mighty multitude, ready perhaps in turn to conduct me to it, my soul called forth the beloved individual, and seating him at my side in a safe and humble solitude, asked what we should lose by the change ?—lose ! Ah ! rather what might we not gain ?—How sweet

sweet was it then to find that Lord Essex himself at length cherished ideas wholly similar; that, weary of war, ambition, envy, and all the turbulence of life, in renouncing the court of Elizabeth, he left, with the power, the wish of possessing it!—That time, solitude, reflection, disappointment itself, had rather refined than extinguished his taste, which thus regained its true bias: seeking in the powers of the mind, and the impulses of the heart, a happiness not to be found on earth, when those sources fail to supply it.

In leaving for ever the dreary scene of my exile, I could be sensible of only one regret: but flattering myself, that Tracey would ere long restore the sweet Phœbe to my friendship, I soon dried up the tears due to the floods that charming girl bestowed upon our parting. The rapid motion of the vessel bore no proportion to my impatience; whenever I looked, that detested isle was still in view; I thought we should never lose sight of it.

W. L. 2. Oh!

Oh ! how I anticipated the sweet repose which awaited us in the green solitudes of Cumberland ! I flattered myself that Effex would already be there ; though Tracey assured me, spies still followed his steps, from which only a long confirmation of his peaceful intentions could relieve him.

At length the pleasant shore of England was descried ; welcome to my heart was the shout which proclaimed it ! Our very souls shot through our eyes once more, to hail our native country. We found at the port, servants, and every accommodation that might render our journey easy. Ah ! how beautiful was that journey !—a thousand various objects of simple majesty united to form one perfect whole ; and a new delight stole on every sense, as we wound through varying vallies embowered by hanging woods, which were reflected in many an expanse of water, and dim shadowed at intervals by mountains whose arid heights defied the sun they seemed to swell to.

Far in these green labyrinths we came at once upon the Castle from whence I now write.—It is in fact only an elegant ruin, and might rather be termed the residence of the anchorite, Solitude. In tearful gladness the fair owner threw her arms round my neck, and blest the power which permitted us at last to rest here.

From this antique mansion do I date my narrative ; and, in arranging it, seek only to fill up those hours yet unblest with the presence of him born to fill every future one. Dear Lady Pembroke, I cannot express to you the divine repose which hushes at last my overworn faculties.—I look back with wonder on all the past griefs, the mortal conflicts, my shattered frame has contended with. So pure, so perfect, is now my grateful tranquillity, that it seems proof even against misfortune itself.—No more shall my beating heart—my burning brain—but why should I revert to such dismal recollections ?

Embosomed in the maternal arms of nature ; safe in the obscure and solitary

situation of this ivied asylum, here my affrighted soul, like a scared bird, faintly folds up its weary wings ! delights to be alone, and joys in mere safety. I think. I can never be happy, be grateful enough, and while my heart exhausts itself in enjoyment, I still call on it for ebullitions to which it is unequal. Pride, passion, vanity, all the grosser particles of my nature are at once exhaled, and every pure, every social virtue, unfolds and blossoms to the vernal sun, forerunning even the snow-drop.

Oh ! that radiant, glorious luminary ! how new to me seems its influence !—Dark have been the films through which I have hitherto viewed it. Pardon, my darling friend, these flights of fancy : how playful does the mind grow when at peace with itself !

Hasten, generous Tracey, hasten to my love, and inform him of our arrival. But is not Tracey already gone ? Oh ! hasten then, my Essex ; quit that busy scene, where virtue incessantly hovers on the verge of a precipice a thousand
ready

ready hands would plunge her over,—partake with me the deep repose of this solitude—no longer heed Elizabeth herself; not even her power can reach us here. Nature's gigantick phalanx, impassable mountains present their formidable summits in long array, overawing every inferior guard; while, in their vivid hollows, happiness reposes on the bosom of her mother, Nature.—Oh! come then, and in

*“ A life exempt from public haunt,
 “ Find tongues in trees, books in the running streams,
 “ Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.”*

* * * * *

A thunder-bolt falls on my brain! Avenging heaven, why does it not wholly split it? Tried—sentenced—condemned—while I, entombed in a now detested solitude, gaily dreamt of endless happiness.—Oh! let me once more rush madly into the world, overwhelm my agonized

senses with the shouts of armies—the groans of the dying—fountains of blood—rivers of tears—find if possible a horror in nature may counteract that now raging in my soul.—The wreck of the universe alone can equal it.—But let me give the ruin scope—wherefore, wherefore, should I wish it lessened—Oh! Lady Pembroke!

LADY PEMBROKE WRITES.

The trembling hand of the friend last invoked, takes up the pen to finish the woes of a fair unfortunate, who will never more be her own historian.—Alas, they had now reached their climax.

The eccentric turn of mind which made the sweet Ellinor form a plan so extraordinary as her supposed death and burial, excited an astonishment in me, its artful execution alone could increase. Nevertheless, the regular pursuit of a single idea was far from persuading her friends, that her intellects had recovered their tone, or equality.

When

When this heart-breaking narrative came to my hands, I could not but observe that the sweet mistress of Essex had a very partial knowledge of his character, or information of his actions.—Elected with the most equitable and generous heart that ever actuated a human bosom, that nobleman's virtues often took a false color from the selfish views of those who once found the way to it. Credulity was so much his fault, that even his enemies profited by it, whom he always ceased to consider as such, the moment they deigned to deceive him with a false protestation of regard—In fact, the lenity of his nature continually counteracted that ambition, which was its only vice; and irradiated his character with the milder glories of humanity; a lustre, more soft, pure, and lasting, than mere conquest can bestow. Nevertheless, the early habits of power and distinction had seized on his affections, and even his love co-operating with that indulged foible, they increased together. The daring project he had formed was

no way unfeasible, had he managed it with address: for he possessed the hearts of the whole kingdom, a few envious individuals excepted. But art was unknown to Essex; and those his superiority offended, were proficient in that science: unhappily too, they were so immediately around the Queen, that they could convert the suspicions she sometimes entertained of his conduct, into certainty. Yet so rooted was her love for this unfortunate favorite, that it long contended with that she bore herself; and tears of ill-judged fondness have often absorbed the bitterness his enemies would have wrought to his ruin. Such a weakness alone could induce a sovereign, wise and experienced like Elizabeth, to delegate a power scarce inferior to her own, into the hands of a Nobleman, valiant, popular, and aspiring. In consenting to Essex's command in Ireland, the Queen made an absolute sacrifice of her own inclination (which was only gratified when he was near her) to his; or, perhaps, in effect,

both

both unconsciously yielded to the secret policy which invariably sought to separate them.—Convinced she had bound him to her by every tie of gratitude, honor, and confidence, how must so high a spirit as that of Elizabeth be shocked, wounded, and irritated, to see her favorite loiter away his days inactively in Ireland, regardless alike of her admonitions, and the censures of the people!—Insensibly she imbibed the prejudices of the Cecil family, the inflexible enemies of the Earl; to whom she submitted the government of the state, less from any esteem for their talents, than the latent desire of piquing the negligent Essex, to whom they were equally obnoxious. Time confirmed to the Cecil faction, the influence they at first owed solely to resentment. The wearisome supineness of the Lord Deputy was at once succeeded by a suspicious, and mysterious conduct. His secret treaties with the arch-rebel, Tiroen, the anonymous captive who seduced him into these—all was reported with aggravation.

gravation to Elizabeth. The resentment occasioned by the error of his conduct, was doubled when she knew that of his heart : jealousy took full possession of hers, and she determined to make him severely sensible of her power ; but she was told it was not safe, at that period, to recall him. Obligated for the first time in her life to controul herself, and meditate how to get him again into her power, her temper became absolutely intolerable. Her Ladies preserved a melancholy silence, save the artful few won over to foment, and profit by, her irritated passions. The fate of Essex seemed wholly to depend on the event of a war, hitherto unprosperous ; when to the astonishment alike of friends and enemies, without performing any considerable exploit which might secure him a welcome, the Earl posted suddenly home, and presented himself before Elizabeth, with the dauntless air of unblemished innocence. Whether the surprise of the moment really revived that powerful passion of which
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He had so long been the object, or whether fear for her life made her dissemble the bitterness and rage swelling at her heart, is a circumstance which never reached my knowledge. It is certain the Queen received him graciously, and listened to a very imperfect and incoherent defence of his conduct. They parted friends; and Essex instantly giving way to that credulity, which so often made every talent art and nature could unite in his person abortive, considered himself as effectually re-established in her heart, and indulged all the exultation such a triumph over his enemies could not fail to occasion.

What a thunder-stroke then was his immediate disgrace! a disgrace he could not but impute to his own imprudence; since in returning without advice, he had delivered himself voluntarily into the hands of his enemies. To the mortification of a long and humiliating imprisonment was shortly after super-added a killing grief, in the supposed loss of the beautiful Ellinor.

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Resigning himself to a sullen and silent despair, Essex no longer condescended to offer Elizabeth any further vindication of his conduct, nor could be persuaded to make the least submission. This concussion of feelings, however, shivered his animal, no less than his mental, system. A fever followed, which soon rose to a dangerous height. Obstinate rejecting all medical advice, he declared a thousand times that he wished only to die: nor had the wish been vain, but that the Queen, unable wholly to subdue the sentiments of tenderness which had so long reigned in her heart, sent her own physician to attend him, with offers of peace and pardon. The desperate state in which she found the Earl, was faithfully reported to Elizabeth; who, touched to the heart, hesitated whether she should not revive him by an immediate visit; so hard will it always be to counteract by political manœuvres the genuine impressions of nature. The Cecil party suddenly found themselves on the brink of ruin; and

every argument, fear, pride, or prudence, could suggest, was enforced to delay this interview. Elizabeth yielded to the powerful combination of reasons in that instance, but could not deny herself the pleasure of corresponding with Lord Essex as he grew better; and soon suffered him to vindicate his conduct: nay, even condescended to reproach him with the unknown lady who had so fatally influenced it. To this perplexing hint, he replied, his grief alone must answer; and the melancholy tenor of his life so exactly agreed with this declaration, that Elizabeth pressed no farther into a secret it was plain the grave now veiled: rather seeking by kindness to invigorate a mind ill-fortune had borne too hard upon.

It was now the shining time in the life of Essex. The purple torrent of successful war had hitherto swept away, or sunk, those sweet humanities, those social virtues; time at length brought to light in the vale of adversity.—Endued with eloquence,

quence, taste, science, sense, and sensibility, he now resigned himself to the charms of philosophy, poesy, and the mathematicks : innocent and tranquil resources, to which the mind must ever turn when disappointed, if blest with powers capable of relishing them. The Cecils never thought Essex more dangerous. Age and infirmity now made Elizabeth anxious for peace abroad, and tranquillity at home, and there wanted only a meeting between her, and the altered Earl, to re-establish him in her favor : but that meeting his enemies entered into a league to prevent ; and began, by winning Elizabeth's physician to order the Earl of Essex into the country.—An artifice so refined as his liberation was not immediately discovered to be policy by any party ; and the Queen lulled into a belief that she could honorably receive him when he should return, suffered him to depart without an audience.

Wearied of wars, camps, and political jealousies, and discussions, the melancholy

choly Effex desired in freedom only the solitude he found; when Tracey returned with the astonishing news that the mistress he still adored yet existed. —Fatal news to his future repose! —The impossibility of openly claiming Ellinor, revived with his passion all his dangerous and precarious projects. —Every other effort to obtain her was made without success, ere he secretly applied to the King of Scots; who always knew his own interest too well to grant any favor without having secured an adequate return. James ardently desired to be nominated as the successor of Elizabeth by herself, and had not spared bribes, promises, or flattery, to interest those around her whom he thought likely to influence her choice. The unhopcd overtures of the man whose courage and ambition James most feared, was a circumstance of importance. Uninformed of the real name or characters of the prisoners Lord Effex so eagerly desired to recover, the King of Scots sent the Laird of Dornock notice to guard them more strictly. The impetuous tem-

per of Essex made him always resign to the prevailing object, every other interest: but a treaty like this could not be carried on so secretly as to escape the suspicious eyes of the ministers. With what malignant joy did they silently watch its progress till the moment when its publication would inflame the Queen to their wishes!

Essex now once more thought it his interest to be busy, admired, and popular: he relapsed into all his old habits, and, having won the Queen's permission, returned to London. Far, however, from profiting by this indulgence, to re-instate himself in her favor, he remained entirely at home; throwing open his doors to all impoverished officers, and clergy, among whom a number of spirited adventurers appeared, whose lavish praises seemed to render his popularity greater than ever.

Elizabeth, with disgust, beheld him assume the distinctions she perhaps intended once more to bestow; and kept in silence a strict watch upon his conduct. By a

refinement, known only in politicks, his enemies scattered among his partizans many creatures of their own, instructed to dive into all his intentions, and spread abroad seditious and treasonable projects, as though intrusted by himself with such. This malice was but too successful.— Inflated with the adulation of misjudging friends, the extravagant admiration of the multitude, and the insidious attacks of his enemies, the deluded Effex sprung the mine himself by which he was destroyed.

The mischief commenced by a broil between the Lords Southampton and Grey; the last assaulting the former in the street; and, though the offender was ceremoniously punished, the spirit of party broke out in a thousand little daily quarrels. The Queen, already persuaded that Effex, ever haughty and impetuous, scorned her power, despised her person, and only waited a favorable moment openly to insult both, was irritated beyond all endurance by the artful

discovery (at this cruel crisis) of his secret treaty with the King of Scots. Its real cause was unknown to her, and the offence, though trifling in itself, of a nature most likely to exasperate a Sovereign whose eyes were ever turned from a successor she refused to acknowledge.—

The discovery proved decisive—Elizabeth instantly resolved to deliver her ungrateful favorite up to the laws of his country, and authorized a judicial inquiry into his conduct. The Cecil party desired no more; for well they knew, Essex would rather die than brook the deliberate indignity. The commissioned Lords assembled at his house on a Sunday, as the time when they should be most safe from the insults of the partial populace.—They found the Earl sufficiently inflamed, who, swearing he never more would become a voluntary prisoner, shut up the Lord Keeper, and the rest, in his own house, rushing forth armed, and followed only by a few friends and do-

domestics to claim the protection of the people.

By a fatality not peculiar to himself, the bubble, popularity, which had so long swelled and glittered before his mistaken eyes, burst at once, and left to him a vacuum in nature. The sacred day was but too judiciously chosen by his enemies.—Without preparation——almost without a friend, the unhappy Essex rushed through the streets of London, crowded only with peaceful and humble mechanics, who emerged from every close lane environed by their wives and children to enjoy the weekly holiday.—To people of this stamp the gallant Essex was almost unknown—certainly indifferent; with stupid and curious eyes, they turned to gaze on those warlike steps none ventured to follow—steps which bore the noble Essex so fast toward ruin. Distress, however, only increased his desperation, and the citizens being spirited into making an ineffectual effort to prevent his return, a skirmish

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ensued.

ensued. The amiable Tracey had the fate he desired, and fell at the side of his Lord; who, even in this cruel moment, dropt a tear on a youth so beloved. Fame, honor, happiness, nay, even life, were fleeting fast from Essex; and however careless of these goods, friendship still asserted her rights over his feelings.—In compassion to the few generous adherents who must have fallen in his cause, had he longer resisted, the Earl at length surrendered his sword.

All was now over with this admired, and erring favorite.—Imprisoned in the Tower he had ample leisure to reconsider the events which brought him there.—The desertion of the people had opened his eyes to the realities of life.—He too sensibly found, that, while he ministered to their necessities, their pride, or their pleasures, the multitude could rend the air with acclamations; but that the moment a claim is in turn made on their feelings, they always become cold, torpid, and inanimate. He perceived with
vain

vain regret that he had been duped into this outrage on the laws of society, by the manœuvres of his enemies, no less than the credulity of his heart. But Lord Effex was not formed to profit by these humiliating discoveries; they impressed a nature so generous, only with the deepest disgust.—He was, however, consoled with remembering that self-preservation was the sole motive for his daring attack, and that no action of his life had yet violated the duty he had sworn the Queen. He resolutely prepared himself to meet the judgment of his peers, and only lamented the friendship which involved the generous Southampton in his fate; who shared without regret the prison of a friend so dear.

The Queen, meanwhile, experienced every emotion such a painful contrariety of passions must necessarily occasion.—The imprisonment of her favorite, as usual, seemed to cancel his offence: but he was now beyond her jurisdiction, and the victim of the laws. She had un-

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happily

happily surrendered him up to them, and robbed herself of every prerogative but that of pardoning; a prerogative she feared so high a spirit would never solicit her to exert.—She regretted, too late, having driven him to so dangerous an extreme, and while his fate was yet uncertain, suffered more, perhaps, than he did in its completion.

The friends of the Earl, persuaded that no kind of influence would be spared to bring him to the block, were unanimous in intreating him to win over the Queen by an early repentance and submission: but they knew not the grandeur of the heart they would have humbled.—Born to distinguish himself most eminently when outward distinctions were withdrawn, it was then only Essex seemed to use his better judgment. “Can any one call himself my friend,” would he indignantly exclaim, “and yet wish me poorly to petition for an obscure, an ignominious life? What! to pine away the flower of manhood in infamy and solitude! shunned by all yet unstigmatized by public justice,
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and shunning, in turn, the exalted characters I dare no longer emulate.—Shut up with those tormenting companions, my own thoughts, till led, perhaps, by desperation, to inflict that fate upon myself, I have meanly evaded receiving from the law.—No, my friends, I am enthralled here as a traitor—if proved one, it is fit I expiate my crime; and if acquitted I know the value of a life ventured hitherto only for my country.”——Neither arguments, or intreaties, could shake his resolution; and he heard with unequalled firmness that public sentence, from which, he still persisted, there was no appeal. In vain every dear and affecting image was portrayed in the strongest colours before his active imagination.—From that of the woe-struck Ellinor, liberated too late, and weaving in a distant solitude a thousand fairy bowers for love and happiness to dwell in—from her alone his nature shrunk. “You may wound my heart,” would he sighing say, “through every vein; but my reason is still inflexible, nor is even that sweet creature

creature an argument for my submitting to disgrace.—No! when I raised my eyes to thee, dear Ellinor, my conscious soul beheld in itself all that could intitle me to mate with thee.—I cannot resolve to look up even to the woman I adore.—Better she should weep me dead, than secretly despise me while yet existing.—Pure and precious will be the tears that fall upon my grave, but never could I behold one which would not secretly reproach me.——Leave me, my friends, to my fate; honor has hitherto been the invariable rule of my conduct, nor can I now adopt another.”

From the moment the condemnation of Essex reached the Queen, peace and rest were strangers to her.—The chosen of her heart was now the victim of the laws, and that heart must bleed through his, unless he could be induced to throw himself on her mercy. A thousand emissaries assured him of a ready pardon——a word, a wish, would have obtained it.—To these he ever replied with the same collected

lected air, “that had the Queen earlier shewn him this indulgence, his life had never come within the censure of the law; but as even her utmost bounty now could only prolong to him the liberty of breathing, he was willing, as well for her safety as in submission to his sentence, to resign a privilege, which had been a burthen the moment it became his only one.” An answer thus calculated to touch the most indifferent heart, stabbed that of Elizabeth: yet as, unasked, to grant him a pardon, would stamp her declining life with inexcusable weakness, she underwent every hour the most trying conflicts.

Ah! why do I say the most trying? alas, there was a fair, and forlorn one, buried in Cumberland, who more than died when this cruel intelligence reached her. As the sentence of Essex extended to his friend Southampton, the relations of the latter dispatched an express to his wife, hoping she would arrive in London time enough to solicit his pardon of the Queen.

Queen. The messenger found the unfortunate Ladies buoyed up with safety, solitude, and many a gentle hope. When the approach of horses echoed through the remote valley, no other emotion was excited in either, than the fond and latent flutter arising from the idea that it might be one or both of the condemned Earls.—How terrible was then the transition in their minds, when fully informed of their desperate situation; and bereft of every resource expected misery supplies! The unhappy wife of Southampton, engrossed by her own share in the affliction, observed not its deep, its deadly effect, on the intellects of her equally suffering friend; till the stupefaction of Ellinor became intense, and obvious, and the evil irremediable.

The human mind, even when most elevated, is not equal to the influence of two opposing passions—a sacrifice must be made, and friendship yields to love. Lady Southampton posted away with unremitting diligence, intrusting her friend

friend to the care of faithful servants, who were directed to bring her forward more leisurely.—The deep gloom of the sweet Ellinor's mind, in the course of the journey, gave way to a vague and irregular gaiety; but as this had sometimes forerun her recovery, so might it then, had she been surrounded with such persons as knew her disposition.—Those who had her in charge, uninformed of her name, situation, and wounded spirit, could not reasonably be expected to guard against events they could not possibly foresee. It happened, one day, that while they were resting, Ellinor cast her eyes upon an extensive building, full in sight, and her wandering imagination called it Kenilworth.—An officious attendant informed her: it was Fotheringay Castle.—She wildly shrieked, stretched forth her arms expressively towards the fatal mansion, then tearing those lovely tresses once before devoted to her calamity, and scarce grown to their usual luxuriance, threw herself on the ground, and relapsed into total insanity.

But

But when Lady Southampton entered the prison of her Lord, upon whose aching bosom she poured forth all her grief and passion, his disturbed friend found every fibre of his heart wrung ; and turning a fearful, eager eye toward the door, felt a horror not to be expressed, at finding no one followed her.—The afflicted wife wanted presence of mind to conceal a truth which consummated the fate of Effex—a truth so terrible, that vain would he have believed it invented by his friends to reconcile him to his sentence.—Convinced at length—“ now indeed do I feel the weight of my bonds—now indeed am I a prisoner,” would he exclaim.—“ Oh, Ellinor, matchless Ellinor, that I could fly to thee ! recall once more that unequalled soul, which always, like a frightened bird, forsakes its home when misery hovers over it.—Thou, thou, hast broken a spirit equal to every other affliction—thou hast made a coward of me—to save thee, my love, I could almost resolve, poorly to condition for a disgraceful life, and wish to survive my honor.”

Persuaded that his presence would have the same effect it once before took at St. Vincent's Abbey, he passionately solicited to see her.—This single idea seized upon his mind—it even became his solemn request—his dying wish.—In the hopeless state of her disorder the effect of their meeting was dreaded only on his account ; but as intreaty and argument proved vain, his friends at length resolved to yield to his passionate, his only solicitation. The day was now appointed for the execution of Essex, and the pardon of Southampton granted, which alone he desired ;—as all his friends were freely admitted to his person, there was no difficulty in leading thither the darling of his heart, in the habit of a youth, accompanied by Lady Southampton.——

Worlds could not have bribed *me* to witness such an interview.—Ah, dearest Ellinor ! were those senses they so eagerly desired to restore to thee, in reality a loss ? How, had they been perfect, wouldest thou have supported the trying scene, ex-

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piring love, and officious friendship, dragged thee to witness?—How wouldest thou have fixed thine eyes on the gloomy tower, or those guarded gates through which thy lover must so soon be borne, but never more should pass?—How must thy soul have bled to behold those fine features a few hours were to separate from the heart which then gave them such agonized expression! But that superlative misery was not ordained thee.—Retired, beyond the reach of love itself, were all the various powers of that susceptible soul!—Thy vague eyes confessed not their everlasting object—thy ear caught not his voice—nor did thy bosom answer with a single sigh, the bursts of grief which struggled at that of thy lover, still exquisitely alive to every human affliction! To thee his parting soul yet clung; and when his eyes beheld thee no longer, they willingly shut out creation. He saw not, from the moment of Ellinor's departure, friend or relation; but turning all his contemplations towards
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the awful futurity in which he was so soon to launch, died to this world even before his execution.

On the night which preceded that event, this billet, equally addressed to my sister (with whom the dear unfortunate resided) and myself, was delivered.

“ Dear, generous guardians of the lost angel my soul yet bleeds over, receive in this my parting blessing ; and pardon, oh, pardon, an incredulity but too severely punished by conviction ! a conviction so terrible as reconciles me to the death to-morrow will bestow. Yes, these eyes have been blasted with beholding the pale statue of my love, dead while yet breathing—speechless—insensate. ——To the gathered multitude—the fatal scaffold—the axe which separates soul and body, I turn for relief when this remembrance presses upon me.

“ Adieu, ye faithful sisters of the gallant Sydney—Oh ! if intelligence too late should visit the fair form bequeathed to your friendship, with sympathy soothe every aching sense.——Yet wake no

more to woe my worshipped Ellinor!—
Still may thy pure spirit slumber in its
breathing tomb, till that appointed hour
which at length unites thee to thy

E S S E X.”

Tower.

It seemed as if in this epistle he enclosed every lingering weakness of mortality; for the remaining hours of his life were devoted solely to the duties of religion.—In the flower of manhood, at the age of three and thirty, this envied favorite resigned every earthly distinction, and ascended the scaffold with a composure innocence and Heaven alone can bestow. The melting multitude too late bewailed to see his glorious youth set thus in blood.—His ear caught the general murmur of sorrow and applause; he cast a look of corrected knowledge on the spectators; then lifting his eyes to Heaven, serenely submitted to the executioner; who severed a head and heart, which, had they acted in unison, might have awed the world.

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Of her so much beloved, so generously, so fatally faithful, little more remains to be said.—Neither time, care, or medicine, ever availed toward the restoration of those intellects which might only have proved an additional misfortune—Yet even in this state of insanity, Heaven permitted her to become the instrument of a singular and exemplary vengeance.

A year or more had elapsed, during which her calamity took all those variable and dreadful forms peculiar to itself.—The desire of having every medical assistance made me often bring her to London; where one evening, with a degree of reflection and art sometimes blended with insanity, she eluded the care of her attendants; and well knowing every avenue of the palace, passed them all with wonderful facility.

The Queen wholly sunk in the chilling melancholy of incurable despair, and hopeless age, resigned herself up to the influence of those evils.—Her ladies were frequently employed in reading to her, which was the only relief her chagrin admitted.—One memorable

night it was my turn—Elizabeth dismissed every other attendant, in the vain hope of finding a repose of which she had for ever deprived herself. I pursued my task a long while, when the time conspired with the orders of the Queen to produce a silence so profound, that had not her starts now and then recalled my senses, hardly could my half-closed eyes have discerned the pages over which they wandered.—The door flew suddenly open—a form so fair—so fragile—so calamitous appeared there, that hardly durst my beating heart call it Ellinor. The Queen started up with a feeble quickness, but had only power to falter out a convulsive ejaculation. I instantly remembered that Elizabeth believed her dead, and imagined this her spectre. The beautiful phantom (for surely never mortal looked so like an inhabitant of another world) sunk on one knee, and while her long garments of black flowed gracefully over the floor, she lifted up her eyes toward Heaven, with that nameless sweetness, that wild ineffable benignity, madness.

ness alone can give ; then meekly bowed before Elizabeth.—The Queen, heart-struck, fell back into her seat, without voice to pronounce a syllable.—Ellinor arose, and approached still nearer ; standing a few moments, choaked and silent. “ I once was proud, was passionate, indignant,” said the sweet unfortunate at last, in the low and broken voice of inexpressible anguish, “ but Heaven forbids me now to be so—Oh ! you who was surely born only to chastise my unhappy race, forgive me—I have no longer any sense but that of sorrow.”——Again she sunk upon the floor, and gave way to sobbings she struggled in vain to suppress. The Queen dragged me convulsively to her, and burying her face in my bosom exclaimed indistinctly,—“ save me—save me—oh, Pembroke, save me from this ghastly spectre !”——“ Essex—Essex—Essex !” groaned forth the prostrate Ellinor, expressively raising her white hand at each touching repetition. The violent shudderings of the Queen, marked

the deep effect that fatal name took on her.—“Somebody told me, continued the lovely wanderer, that he was in the Tower, but I have looked there for him till I am weary—is there a colder, safer prison, then? But is a prison a place for your *favorite*, and can you condemn him to the grave?—Ah gracious Heaven, strike off his head—his beauteous head!—Seal up those sparkling eyes for ever.—Oh, no, I thought not,” said she with an altered voice.—“So you hid him *here* after all, only to torment me.—But Effex will not see me suffer—will you, my Lord? So—so—so”—the slow progress of her eyes round the room, shewed, she in imagination followed his steps.—“Yes—yes,”—added she, with revived spirits, “I thought that voice would prevail, for who could ever resist it?—and only I need die then; well, I do not mind that—I will steal into his prison and suffer in his place, but be sure you don’t tell him so, for he loves *me*—ah! dearly does he love me, but I alone need sigh at that, you know.”

And

And sigh she did indeed.—Oh! what a world of woe was drawn up in a single breath!—The long silence which followed, induced the Queen once more to raise her head—the same sad object met her eyes, with this difference, that the sweet creature now stood up again, and putting one white hand to her forehead, she half raised the other, as earnestly demanding still to be heard, though her vague eyes shewed her purpose had escaped her.—“Oh, now I remember it,” resumed she, “I do not mind how you have me murdered, but let me be buried in Fotheringay; and be sure I have *women* to attend me *be sure* of that—you know the reason.” This incoherent reference to the unprecedented fate of her royal mother, affected Elizabeth deeply.—“But could not you let me once more see him before I die?” resumed the dear wanderer.—Oh! what pleasure would it give me to view him on the Throne!—Oh, I *do* see him there!” exclaimed she in the voice of surprise and transport. “Benign, majestic!—

Ah, how glorious in his beauty !—Who would not die for thee, my Effex !”——
“ Alas, never, never, never, shall I see him !” groaned forth the agonized Elizabeth.——“ Me married to him !” resumed our friend, replying to some imaginary speech,—“ oh, no, I took warning by my sister !—I will have no more bloody marriages : you see I have no ring,” wildly displaying her hands, “ except a black one ; a *black* one indeed, if you knew all—but I need not tell *you* that—have I, my Lord ?—look up—here is my love—he himself shall tell you.” She caught the hand terror had caused Elizabeth to extend, but faintly shrieking, drew back her own, and surveyed it with inexpressible horror. “ Oh, you have dipt mine in blood !” exclaimed she, “ a mother’s blood ! I am all contaminated—it runs cold to my very heart.—Ah, no,—it is—it is the blood of Effex ; and have you murdered him at last, in spite of your dotage, and your promises ? murdered the most noble of mankind ! and all because he
could

could not love you. Eye on your wrinkles!—can one love age and ugliness?—Oh, how those artificial locks, and all your paintings sickened him!—How have we laughed at such preposterous folly!—But I have done with laughing now—we will talk of graves, and shrouds, and church-yards——Methinks I fain would know where my poor sister lies buried—you will say in my heart perhaps—it has indeed entombed all I love; yet there must be some little unknown corner in this world, one might call her grave, if one could but tell where to find it: there she rests at last with her Leicester—he was your *favorite* too—a bloody, bloody, distinction.”——The Queen, who had with difficulty preserved her senses till this cutting period, now sunk back in a deep swoon.

The distress of my situation cannot be expressed.—Fearful lest any attempt to summon a single being should irritate the injured Ellinor to execute any dire revenge; for which I knew not how she
was

was prepared, had not Elizabeth at this juncture lost her senses, I really think mine would have failed me. I recollected that the Queen by every testimony was convinced that the unhappy object thus fearfully brought before her, died in the country long since ; nor was it wise or safe, for those who had imposed on her, now to acknowledge the deception. “ So—so—so,” cried Ellinor, with a start, “ would one have thought it possible to break that hard heart after all ? and yet I have done it—She is gone to—no, not gone to Effex.”——“ Let us retire, my sweet Ellen,” said I, eager to get her out of the room, lest the Queen should suffer for want of assistance.—“ Hush,” cried she, with increasing wildness, “ they will say we have beheaded her also.—But who are you ?” fixing her hollow eyes wistfully on me, “ I have seen you somewhere ere now, but I forget all faces in gazing on his pale one.—I know not where I am, nor where you would have me go,” added she, softly sighing, “ but you look like an angel of light, and may be, you will carry

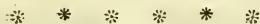
me with you to Heaven." I seized the blessed minute of compliance, and drawing her mourning hood over her face, led her to the little court, where my servants waited my dismissal; when committing her to their charge, I returned to awake the ladies in the antichamber, through whose inadvertent slumbers alone, Ellinor had been enabled to pass to the closet of the Queen; a circumstance which combined with a variety of others to give this strange visitation the appearance of being supernatural.

Every common remedy was tried in vain to recover Elizabeth, and the applications of the faculty alone could recall her senses; but the terror she had endured shook them for ever. Shuddering with apprehensions for which only I can account, she often holds incomprehensible conferences; complains of an ideal visitor; commands every door to be shut; yet still fancies she sees her, and orders her to be kept out in vain. The supposed disregard of those in waiting incenses a temper so many causes concur to

to render peevish, and her unmerited anger produces the very disregard she complains of. Rage and fear unite thus to harass her feeble age, and accelerate the decay of nature. When these acute sensations subside, grief and despair take possession of her whole soul;—nor does she suffer less from the sense of her decaying power. Unwilling to resign a good she is unable to enjoy, she thinks every hand that approaches, is eager to snatch a sceptre, she will not even in dying bequeath. Oh, sweet Matilda! if yet indeed thou survivest to witness this divine vengeance, thy gentle tears would embalm even thy most mortal enemy! thou couldst not without pity behold the imperial Elizabeth, lost to the common comforts of light, air, nourishment, and pleasure; that mighty mind which will be the object of future, as it has been of past, wonder, presenting now but a breathing memento of the frailty of humanity.—Ah, that around her were assembled all those aspiring souls whose wishes centre in do-

minion;

minion ; were they once to behold this distinguished victim of ungoverned passion, able to rule every being but herself, how would they feel the potent example ! Ah, that to them were added the many who scorning social love, confine to self the blessed affections which alone can sweeten the tears we all are born to shed !—Gathering round the weary couch where the emaciated Queen withers in royal solitude, they might at once learn urbanity, and correct in time errors, which, when indulged, but too severely punish themselves.



Absorbed and blended in the busy and awful scenes this heart-breaking history presented to my mind—an anxious partaker in each succeeding calamity—I seemed to live over again the melancholy years we had been separated, in the person of my sister.—My own misfortunes—my darling daughter, the whole world vanished from before my eyes—deep-fixed

on objects no longer existing, or existing but to double my affliction : I remained almost the statue of despair ; every sense seeming rivetted on the manuscript I held ; and buried in so profound a reverie, that Lady Arundell judged it prudent to interrupt it. The consolatory reflections her friendship dictated, died on my ear, but reached not a heart which deeply pursued the sad chain of ideas thus presented to it.—Starting as from a frightful sleep, I, at last, sunk on my knees, and raising my eyes, with the manuscript, at once toward Heaven—“ Oh, mighty Author of universal being !” sighed I, “ thou who hast lent me fortitude to struggle with almost unequalled trials, support my exhausted soul against this last—this greatest.—Let not the killing idea that it is a *human* infliction, trouble the pure springs of piety, whence alone the weary spirit can draw consolation.—Rather strengthen me with the holy belief that it is thy visitation for some wise end ordained ; so shall my enemies sleep in their graves

graves uncursed, and my heart remain in this agitated bosom unbroken. Alas, who knows but by thy divine appointment, I may be at last permitted to recall the scattered senses of this dear unfortunate? to soothe that deeply-wounded, that embittered spirit! Ah, Ellen!—Ah, my sister!” groaned I, deluged at last with salutary tears,—“changed—lost—annihilated as thou art, my unaltered affection must ever desire thee.—I need not inquire whether she is here—your sympathizing, generous tears, dear Lady Arundell, inform me that the same roof shelters the twin heirs of misfortune.”

Although Lady Arundell acknowledged that my sister was under her protection, fain would she have persuaded me to delay a meeting so touching, till more able to support it; but, deaf to the voice of reason, nature, powerful nature asserted her rights, and my soul obeyed her impassioned impulse. The deep, the eternal impression of this agonizing meeting, recurs even now with all its first force.

force. I had shuddered at the murder of my mother—I had groaned on the coffin of my husband—I had wept a thousand times over the helpless infant who trembled with my bosom—but all these terrible sensations were combined when my sad eyes rested on those still so dear to me—when I saw all their playful lustre quenched, and set in insensibility—when I felt that heart, once the seat of every feminine grace and virtue, throb wild and unconscious against one which I thought every moment would escape from its narrow boundary.—But let me quit a scene too trying for recollection—too touching for description. Oh, Ellinor—my sister!

T H E

R E C E S S ' S , &c.

P A R T VI.

T I M E, which inures us to every kind of suffering, at length strengthened my mind against the heavy sadness impressed on it by the fate of this dear unconscious sufferer. It was with true gratitude and concern I learnt that Heaven had called to itself the amiable and accomplished sister of Lady Arundell, who caught a cold during her attendance on

the sick Queen, which ended in a consumption, and carried her off a few months after Elizabeth. Actuated to the last by the sublimest sympathy and friendship, Lady Pembroke had added, to the moiety of the surveyor's treasure (which she had caused to be dug for in the spot specified) a sufficient sum to secure the dear unfortunate Ellinor every comfort her forlorn state admitted; placing with her Alithea, the favorite maid she had so tenderly commemorated, and committing both to the charge of Lady Arundell; who with equal generosity received so anxious a trust. A virtue thus consummate sanctifies itself, and can receive neither glory or grace from the gratitude of humanity; yet surely the incense of the heart arises even to heaven! accept it then, oh, gentlest of the Sydneys, although insphered there!

The strange and unaccountable difference in my sister's opinion and my own, respecting Lord Leicester, supplied me a source of endless meditation: yet, as this difference became obvious only from
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the time we arrived in London, I could not help imputing her blindness to the same cause she assigned for mine.—Certainly she imbibed the unreasonable prejudices of Lord Essex; whose ambition (however fatally expiated) always inclined him to dislike a Nobleman born every way to supersede him. I saw but too plainly from the irritation and vehemence to which her temper from that period became subject, how much a woman insensibly adopts of the disposition of him to whom she gives her heart. I had not however looked on her choice with the contemptuous asperity with which she regarded mine.—Lord Essex, I will frankly own, ere yet he rose into favor, was gifted like my sister with every captivating advantage of nature.—The fire and ingenuousness which afterwards marked his character, then lived only in his eyes: and the cultivated understanding he possessed, pointed every glance with elegance and expression. One must have loved Lord Leicester to see Essex with indifference—one must have loved him to the excess

I did perhaps, not to remark the attachment my sister now avowed.—Innumerable instances of it flashed on my memory which I was astonished could at the moment escape me. If *she* was indeed more clear sighted than myself—But why do I enter on so vain a discussion?—Alas, dear Ellinor! beloved Leicester! I have no right but to lament ye.

I had likewise gathered another painful doubt from the story of my sister. England had gained a King in the son of Mary Stuart, but her unfortunate daughters must not hope to acquire a brother. From the moment I had been informed that mine had acceded to the throne, the tender mother's heart had fluttered with the idea of presenting to him the lovely girl so nearly allied to his blood. Although regardless of distinction in my own person, I could not turn my eyes on the fair daughter of Lord Leicester without coveting for her every human advantage.—Unwilling to be swayed by prejudice, I separately consulted with the
few

few friends fortune had left me ; who all concurred in giving me an impressi^on of the King, degrading, if not contemptible. They represented him as national, vain, pedantic, credulous, and partial : wanting generosity to bestow a royal funeral on the body of the royal martyr, his unhappy mother ; yet daily impoverished to meanness by favorites and parasites. Enslaved by the imperious spirit of a Queen he neither loved nor valued ; and only endeared to the people he governed through the fickleness of their natures, which are always gratified by change. As those who spoke thus could have no possible interest in vilifying or depreciating him, I could not but give some credit to their account ; and made it my first concern to see the King ; anxious to read in his countenance a confutation of every charge. How unaccountably was I disappointed when my senses took part with his enemies !—I beheld with astonishment, in the person of James, youth without freshness, royalty without

grandeur, height without majesty——an air of slyness and a secret fervility characterized features, which, though devoid of the graces of either distinguished parent, wanted not regularity; and a stooping slouch gait gave an invincible awkwardness to a figure nature had endued with symmetry. Offended and repelled, my heart sunk again into its own little mansion, nor claimed the least alliance with his.—I determined to watch at leisure his real character and conduct, nor ventured to confide to his care the single treasure Heaven had permitted me to retain, of all it once bestowed. Resolved to educate my daughter suitably to the rank she ought to have held, I thought it wise to bury in my own bosom, at least for a time, the secret of her right to it; and the eccentric turn of mind every succeeding day rendered more obvious in the King, made me continually applaud the moderation and foresight which had guarded me on this interesting occasion.

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I, however, judged it necessary to assume a title no human being envied, or offered to dispute with me; and to support it properly without encroaching on my daughter's valuable acquisition, I found that I must resolve to re-visit Kenilworth Castle, now the property of another family.—In the building were contained cabinets so secure and unknown, that Lord Leicester always deposited there, ere he journeyed to London, such papers, jewels, and other valuables, as he thought it unsafe to take with him. On the memorable night when last we quitted that pleasant dwelling, I had assisted him to place in the most curious of these reservoirs several caskets, for which he seemed more than commonly anxious; and I added to their number, that containing Mrs. Marlow's papers, and the testimonials of my birth. As if actuated by some sad pre-sentiment that he should never more re-visit this spot, my Lord took great pains to familiarize me to the management of the springs, and gave into my hands duplicates of the

keys. By a singular chance, amidst all the transitions of my fate these keys remained, and seemed continually to remind me, how important to my daughter's welfare it might one day be to recover the caskets.—Such a motive alone could conquer the reluctance I felt again to behold a spot sacred to the memory of a husband so beloved. You will call this perhaps, a childish weakness, after all I had borne; but alas, the mind feebler and feebler from every conflict, sometimes sinks under a trifle, after repelling the more powerful attacks of ill-fortune with magnanimity.

Lady Arundell, with her usual kindness, proposed accompanying me; and we sorrowfully measured once more those miles which so strongly revived in my mind the most interesting remembrances. At Coventry we rested to inquire into the character of the present owner of Kenilworth Castle. We were told that this magnificent mansion, which I had left fit for the reception of a Sovereign, had long been in the hands
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of a miser, whose avarice had induced him to strip it of its princely ornaments; not less from the desire of converting those into money, than to deprive it of every charm that might tempt the enquiring traveller to knock at the inhospitable gate. Yet, even when this ruin was effected, the structure itself remained so complete a piece of architecture as to attract a number of unwelcome visitors; to exclude whom, he had now let it to some manufacturers, and resided himself in a remote apartment. The chagrin this extraordinary revolution could not but occasion in my mind, was increased when I recollected how hard it would be, perhaps, to gain admission; and even when that was obtained, we knew not whether the only room I wished to lodge in was now habitable. Lady Arundell, with her usual foresight, advised me to seem to have no other motive for this visit, than a desire to re-purchase the Castle; and when shewn through it, to appear to be struck with so severe an indisposition, as soon as I reached the chamber

chamber which contained the cabinets, as should render it impossible to remove me; leaving it to her to reconcile the owner to so troublesome an intruder, by the most lavish generosity. A finesse of this kind alone could ascertain me any success, and the sickliness of my aspect, I was sure, would sufficiently corroborate such an assertion.

We set out immediately, that by arriving in the evening we might have a pretence for passing the night there.—My soul turned from the well-known scene, and sickened alike at sight of the reviving verdure, and the splendid mansion, to me alas, only a gay mausoleum. Humbly I solicited entrance at a gate which once flew open whenever I appeared; but, ah, though the exterior was the same, how strange seemed the alteration within!—No more did the liveried train of assiduous domestics assemble to the distant winding of the huntsman's horn.—No longer did I rest in gilded galleries, whose pictured sides delighted one sense, while their coolness refreshed

another. No longer could I, even in idea, behold the beloved, the noble owner, whose gracious mien endeared the welcome it conveyed—A change which jarred every feeling had taken place. A numerous body of diligent mechanics were plodding in those halls in which Elizabeth had feasted, and their battered sides hardly now informed us where the rich tapestry used to hang. My ears were suddenly stunned with the noise of a hundred looms; and the distant lake once covered with gay pageants, and resounding only to the voice of pleasure, presented us another scene of industry not less busy, strange, and surprising. By incidents of this kind, one becomes painfully and instantaneously sensible of advancing into life. When first we find ourselves sailing with the imperceptible current of time, engrossed either by the danger of our situation, or enchanted with its prospects, we glide swiftly on, scarce sensible of our progress, till the stream revisits some favorite spot: alas, so visible will be the desolation of the shortest interval, that we

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grow old in a moment, and submit once more to the tide, willing rather to share the ruin than review it.

Among the few servants retained by the meagre master of this desolated mansion, one appeared who immediately recalled himself to my mind by the name of Gabriel. I recollected his having been warden of the outer lodges. The title by which I was announced—the weed I still continued to wear, overcame a wretch already bowed to the earth by age, infirmity, and penury: and when to these circumstances was superadded the remembrance of the plentiful and peaceful days he had known under a Lord ever munificent to his domestics, gratitude became agony, and the poor old man sunk in a fit at my feet. An incident like this might well have affected an indifferent spectator.—I was scarce more sensible than himself: and the alarm soon spread through the laborious mechanics, till it was conveyed to Sir Humphry Moreton.—Timorously he emerged from
his

his apartment, and, as the humble crowd made way for him, he measured me afar off with his eye, and seemed lost in conjecture on the subject of my visit.— My purse was yet in my hand, and part of its contents in those of some persons who had lent a ready assistance. Whether this, or the wan delicacy of my looks interested him, I know not; but every care-furrowed feature gradually relaxed as he approached me, striving in vain to soften into the smile of benevolence. I rose to return his courteous salutation, and informed him, that when last I passed the walls of this Castle, I was its mistress, the dear and happy wife of Lord Leicester; but perceiving uncertain apprehensions of some remote claim began again to contract his brow, I added, that sensible I had lost every right in a spot yet dear to me, I came to inquire whether he was disposed to part with it, and to rescue from poverty such worthy servants of its late noble owner as had alike outlived their labour, and him who should have recompensed it.

What heart is insensible to that virtue in which we alone can resemble our Maker?——Benevolence, like religion, awes even those it cannot win. The miser loudly applauded my liberality: and by a greater effort on his part, allowing for the difference of our characters, invited me to spend the night in the Castle. The chamber I had been accustomed to inhabit he called his best, and thither was I conducted; I was not unprovided with the means of ensuring my own welcome, and my servants having spread the cold viands they brought, Sir Humphry's spirits grew light over luxuries he was not to pay for. A temptation so agreeable prolonged his stay, and I at length discovered that the only way to shorten his visit, would be to compliment him with all that remained: seeing my servants, in compliance with the hint, were about to convey it out of the room, fear lest any should be lost by the way, prevailed over the hilarity of

of the moment, and he departed with the wine.

With an impatient beating heart I raised the tapestry, which providentially had been preserved in this room, less from its beauty than antiquity; as it was so worn that it had long been pannelled in many places.—Behind the bed we discovered the secret spring of the cabinet, which I opened without any difficulty; and with the assistance of Lady Arundell took down the well-remembered caskets, pausing at intervals, to weep over all the tender ideas the sight of them recalled so forcibly to my memory; then raising my eyes toward Heaven, while devoutly thanking the God who thus prospered my remaining wishes, I almost fancied I beheld the beatified spirit of him who concealed these treasures.

Lady Arundell would not rest without inspecting their contents. The largest was filled with family papers, bonds, contracts, mortgages, many of which were to me unintelligible, and all useless.

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The next contained letters and little ornaments, less precious from their intrinsic value, than their analogy to particular events—under these was a gilt casket filled with jewels, and what was infinitely more valuable, the authenticated bonds and acknowledgments of all the sums Lord Leicester had providently deposited in other countries; and of which I knew not that any memorandum remained. This was so noble an addition to the bequest which already enriched my sweet Mary, that it seemed to me, as if her father even from the grave delighted to endow her: while the Almighty, gracious even when we think him most severe, had thus secreted, for her advantage, treasures it would have been impossible for me to have preserved through so many desperate vicissitudes.

The next casket was a gift from the fond mother to the darling of her heart: it contained all the testimonials of the Queen of Scots, and other parties concerned

cerned on the subject of my birth, with the contract of marriage between Lord Leicester and myself. I felt rich in these recovered rights : and though prudence might never permit me to claim alliance with King James, yet to bequeathe to my daughter the power of doing so, at whatever period it should appear advantageous, was a great consolation to me.

Lady Arundell and I passed part of the night in packing these valuables in empty trunks brought for that purpose ; then, closing the secret cabinet, and leaving no traces of our search for it, we retired to rest. We departed early the next morning, carrying with us that ancient domestic of Lord Leicester, on whom memory had so powerfully operated, and two others, who, long since expelled from the Castle, sought a miserable subsistence in the hamlets around it. It joyed my very heart to supply to these poor wretches a loss irremediable with respect to myself, and the profound attachment of their

few remaining days amply rewarded me.

Through the intervention of the friends I yet possessed, some eminent merchants in London undertook to get the bonds, notes, &c. duly acknowledged : and, in process of time, such considerable sums were of consequence recovered, as ascertained to myself and child our accustomed affluence. Years and misfortune had only cemented the ancient friendship between me and Lady Arundell.—I added my income and family to hers.—Her house was fortunately so near London as to allow me the advantage of procuring the first instructors for my daughter ; and the infirm state of Lady Arundell's health, rendering her as much a prisoner from necessity, as I was from choice, both insensibly found, in the improvement of my daughter, a mild and growing satisfaction, which more than made amends for the world we shut out.

Ah ! could I desire a greater pleasure ? Pardon, madam, the fond extravagance
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of maternal love, and allow me to present to you the darling of my heart in her sixteenth year. Already something taller than myself, to a form that united the strictest symmetry with the wild and variable graces of glowing youth, my Mary added the perfect features of her father, exquisitely feminized by a complexion transparently fair, and a bloom alike delicate and vivid; her hair, of the golden brown I have described as peculiar to his, fell below her waist in a profusion of artless ringlets, heightening her beauty even to luxuriance.—If she had borrowed any thing from me, it was the collected modesty of her mien; and from my sister she had stolen that penetrating, fascinating smile, those two alone of all I ever saw were gifted with:—alas, it was now wholly her own.—Although lightness and elasticity characterized her figure, every limb was rounded even to polishing, and never did I contemplate the soft turn of her white arms when raised to touch the lute, without thinking those

more perfect than even her face.—Her voice was no less sweet in speaking than singing ; with this difference—that in the first she softened the soul to pleasure, in the last, elevated it to rapture.—Her understanding was strong and penetrating, yet delicate and refined.—Her sensibility (the first formed of all her feelings) was rather deep than ardent. Maternal experience had moderated the enthusiasm incident to youth, nor was it obvious in any instance but the love of knowledge. Incessant, unremitting, in her studies, books were her only extravagance, and musick her only relaxation. To compensate for the worldly pleasures I judged it prudence to deprive her of, I was lavish in those to which her taste naturally led : I kept musicians on purpose to accompany her, and found, in the years filled up by herself and her employments, that sweet though saddened pleasure parents only know, and which, perhaps, more than makes us amends for all the lively ones it recalls to our memory.

memory. In effect, the more lovely she grew, the more necessary I found it to hide her ; and, offering her daily up to God, I left her wholly to his disposal ; determined neither my pride, vanity, or ambition, should interfere with the happiness I supplicated for her.

On perusing this description, I perceive at once the impossibility of your crediting it ; yet, far from accusing myself of partiality, I could call on all who ever beheld my daughter to attest my candor.—How readily would Lady Arundell have done so—entendered to her by a love only inferior to my own, that faithful friend found in declining life a new tie wound round her heart, for which she daily thanked me.

As nothing robs us of the confidence of youth like the appearance of mystery, when time called reflection to being in her tender mind, I slowly and by degrees confided to my daughter the painful events you have thus obliged me to commemorate. This indulgence secured

to me her whole heart, and I trembled only lest her deep sense of past misfortunes should affect her health ; for sensibility was the leading feature in her character. Far, however, from seeking to expound the future in her own favor, the flattering prospects her distinguished birth, and yet more distinguished endowments, might well spread before her, passed away like a shadow, and she saw only her mother. A thousand times has she bedewed my hand with a reverence the most endearing : and the tears with which she often embalmed the memory of her father, almost recompensed me for his loss. From that period her expressive eyes were fixed ever on mine with such blended sadness and admiration, as proved she thought me almost fainting by misfortune. More studious henceforward of my pleasure, more submissive to my will, more solicitous for my repose, it seemed as if, in learning that she was my only remaining tie on earth, she conceived that the various affections and duties of all I had

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lost

lost devolved to, and centred in, herself. But sympathy was the genuine impulse of her nature; for with equal care she watched over her unhappy aunt.—Whenever that dear creature's incurable malady assumed the appearance of melancholy, she was extravagantly fond of music.—At those intervals my lovely Mary would lean over her lute with the meek benignity of a descending angel, and extract from it such solemn sounds as breathed at once of peace and sorrow: insensibly soothing the perturbed spirit, and melting only those yet undisturbed. That subtle essence of our natures, sensibility, which madness can only unfix, not annihilate, often paused unconsciously upon the pleasure, and softly sunk into repose.

A child thus eminently amiable at once concentrated my affections—commanded my esteem—possessed my whole confidence—actuated, in short, my very being.—Ah, how noble, how affecting is the friendship grounded on the maternal and

filial tye ; when, unconscious of any weakness in her own heart, the mother dares present it as a pure and unflattering mirror to her child, and, with that self-approbation which even Heaven approves, contemplates the upright, the innocent soul it reflects ! Sacred and indelible becomes that precept which is expressed but by example.—Happy are those enabled to form such an attachment as inexperience strengthens on one hand, and knowledge on the other :—Neither the gusts of youthful passion, nor the nipping frosts of age, can destroy a plant rooted thus by mutual virtue ;—it only gains vigor from time, and, by the peculiar indulgence of the Almighty, our sublimest merit ripens into our most perfect pleasure.

Satisfied that I had already acquired such an influence in my daughter's mind as should enable me to regulate her principles, I left it to years and circumstances to call them into action.—The great business of my life now seemed over ;
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and, delivering my heart up to the flattering presages of maternal love, a thousand visions of almost forgotten grandeur and happiness floated before my eyes, and sometimes half-deluded them.

The fluctuating complaints of Lady Arundell at length settled into a consumption;—it was an hereditary disorder of the Sydneys: nor perhaps could the solicitude of myself and my sweet Mary have availed aught toward her restoration, even if a cruel shock, in which we were all equal sufferers, had not precipitated her fate.

Among the unconscious caprices which by turns actuated my unfortunate sister, was a passion for sitting in the open air.—Neither times or seasons had any influence over her; and she would insist on it alike in the snow of December, and the scorching sun of July.—To this self-will I had no doubt greatly contributed. From the moment of my return to England, I had vehemently opposed the severe controul to which she had heretofore

fore been subject, and habituated her attendants to yield to her in every instance which did not absolutely endanger her safety; fully determined not to render an existence wholly wretched no human being could now make happy. But as uninformed minds never know a medium, the people appointed to watch her gradually suffered her to become sensible of her power, which soon grew into an unbounded indulgence. It was now the depth of winter, and she had sat in the keen air for hours, watching the snow, which fell in abundance.—The most violent shiverings ensued, followed by a fever which settled at last on the nerves, and brought her to the very verge of the grave.—Nevertheless, it appeared to have salutary effects—her spirits were sunk indeed to extreme lowness, but they became more equal, and traces of reason were often discernible in her actions. If she did not remember, she yet strove to know me; and sometimes studied my features in a manner the most touching.

ouching.—I considered these efforts as the very crisis of her fate—her only chance on this side Heaven, and scarce dared leave her for a single moment. I entrusted the care of Lady Arundell (whose situation, though more dangerous, was not so melancholy) to my daughter, fearful lest her youthful spirits should be injured by constantly contemplating an object so affecting. But I had forgot that my own shattered constitution was not equal to the fatigue and anxiety of watching over my sister. I fell one evening into a succession of fainting fits; the servants conveyed me to bed; and the fear of alarming Lady Arundell hindered them from informing my daughter of my situation. My faintings at length gave place to a drowsiness, so intense that I might call it a stupor.—I remained thus for some hours, when I started with an indistinct idea of a heavy fall, and a deep groan. Terror roused, and collected in a moment, every dormant faculty.—I rushed through the chamber which divided mine from my sister's, but I blamed myself for impetuosity

tuosity when I perceived that all was profoundly silent in hers. The two nurses were in a deep sleep, and the expiring watchlights heavily winked, and revived, before the cold dawn of the morning. I gently opened the curtains of her bed—Ah, gracious Heaven, what did I feel when I beheld it empty!—The agonized shriek I gave, roused both her careless attendants, who, impressed with but one idea, flew towards a door I now first perceived to be open: it led to a gallery ornamented with such portraits of our family as had survived the wreck of their fortunes; among them had been incautiously placed that (already fatally commemorated) of the Earl of Essex at the storming of Cadiz, an unfortunate legacy bequeathed to my sister by Lady Pembroke.—My soul took in at a thought all the fearful consequences,—I tottered into the gallery—alas only to behold my worst apprehension verified.—The fair spectre, which once was Ellinor, lay prostrate before the picture—one hand had convulsively gathered her disordered garments

garments over her thin chest; the other was still expressively extended towards the inanimate image of him so beloved—Impatiently I laid my hand upon her heart—it answered not the trembling inquirer—its wandering essence was exhaled, and she had ceased for ever to suffer. Thy parting prayer, oh Effex! was surely prophetic, for her soul, in recovering memory, had burst its mortal bound and soared to Heaven.

Scarce were the dear remains quietly interred, ere those of the amiable Lady Arundell followed them. I bore these losses with devout resignation—The tears which fall when Heaven recalls the unfortunate, still the wild passions of the sad survivor, and deeply wound only the soul yet new to suffering. It was with a quickened apprehension that I perceived the effect of these first afflictions on the tender spirits of my daughter: not that I sought totally to stifle the lively impressions of natural affection;—the tears of youth, like the genial showers of
 May,

May, serve only to save the planter's toil, and simply ripen the rich fruits of the mind ; but when either fall too often, they impoverish the soil, and wash away the buds yet blowing.

My own soul afforded no variety of cheerful images with which I could hope to invigorate the gentle spirits of my Mary : unwilling to form new connections, I rather thought it prudent to change my abode, and by a variety of scenes insensibly amuse her ; and my steward was sent accordingly to seek another mansion. I recollected the moment when the gloomy aisles of a ruined convent, by possessing the simple advantage of novelty, diverted my mind even at the sorrowful crisis which robbed me of a foster mother. Alas, in yet untried youth, the prospect that is unknown ever adds to its own charms those of imagination ; while in maturer life, the heart lingers on all which once delighted it, hopeless of finding in the future, a pleasure fancy can ever compare with those it reviews in

in the past. To my daughter, however, the whole world was yet new, and, in fixing on a scene habitual to my feelings, I could not fail to delight hers. I hired a mansion near the Thames side, in Richmond, to which we removed early in the spring.

Perhaps, in this choice, I was influenced, almost without knowing it, by a latent motive : distinct as I had lived from the world since my return to England, the fame of the Prince of Wales had yet reached me.—This accomplished youth had at once rose above the weaknesses of his father, and the prejudices of his rank ; devoting his heart to the virtues, his mind to the sciences, and his person to those manly and becoming exercises which, invigorating every human power, prepared him alike for the enjoyment of peace, or the pursuit of war. Delighted to understand a Stuart was rising to redeem the glory of his declining race, I passionately longed to see, know, and be valued by the royal
Henry.

Henry. The King, unworthy a son so distinguished, took no pleasure in his company ; but, even in tender youth, resigned him to a court of his own, from the adulation of which merit superior to praise alone could have guarded him. Henry had, like myself, a partiality for the beautiful village of Richmond ; he always passed part of the summer in a palace near the Thames ; and I took pleasure in thinking a partition of wood alone separated his gardens from mine. With a judgment unequalled at his years, the Prince knew how to be affable without abating aught of his dignity ; and, while in the circle of his own court he preserved the authority of a sovereign, to the unfortunate who addressed him, he had the benignity of a brother : such was his character in Richmond, where the people almost adored him, and took pleasure in amplifying on the superior qualities he so eminently possessed. The sweet hopes his merit sometimes infused
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into my bosom, came accompanied with an equal number of fears, yet could not my heart forbear to cherish them.

The revolving season tinged this sweet retreat with every variety of verdure; the waves of the Thames were more translucent than ever; all nature awakened once more to perfection, when the Prince of Wales took up his abode in the adjacent palace.—This news heightened the soft red of my daughter's cheek, and even faintly coloured my wan one.—Not daring to express to her the eager desire I felt to see the Prince, and not accustomed to venture out without her, day after day elapsed in anxious expectation. My gentle Mary, with a delicacy from which I drew the most happy presages, now always chose to go abroad either so early or so late that it was almost impossible we should ever meet the Prince, and the veil she usually wore was closed with so much care as to ensure her the happiness of being overlooked, even if fortune threw him in our way.

Nevertheless, I took notice that the arrival of the Royal Henry strangely filled up the void in our lives.—What he would do, or what he would not do, constantly regulated our motions, and employed my daughter's thoughts even more than my own. His taste afforded us a variety of indulgences of which he knew not that we were partakers.—Sometimes moon-light concerts, or magnificent fireworks; at others, parties on the Thames; where the Prince still took pleasure in beholding a variety of little vessels, built and ornamented for the amusement of his early years, and which were manned by children.—They were often so near, that we fancied we heard the voice of Henry, when both mother and daughter would give way to the same impulse, and hastily retire. The summer might have elapsed in this manner, had not chance been more favorable to our wishes, than we could resolve to be.

We were returning home one morning in an ill-contrived carriage, newly invented

vented for airings, the inconvenience of which I bore patiently, from not being able to walk or ride on horseback for any length of time since my memorable fever.—The servant who drove stopt as usual at the brow of the enchanting hill, that we might enjoy for a few minutes its beauties, when the sound of horns approaching near, informed us that the Prince of Wales was returning from hunting, which at once startled the horses and ourselves. My Mary, actuated only by the impression of the moment, made an eager sign to the man to drive on; and the horses, already frightened, yielded impetuously to the slightest touch of the rein, flying forward with the most dangerous rapidity. The clumsiness of the carriage, and the badness of the road, threatened us every moment with being overturned—for me there was no escape; but could my daughter be prevailed on to leap out, I was sensible she would be safe. Far from obeying my intreaties, or even commands, she threw her arms around

me, and protested it was for me alone she feared. The carriage sunk into a deep rut at last, and we were thrown out at a small distance, with a violence that almost deprived me of my senses:—my darling Mary had wholly lost hers.—I perceived the train of Henry approaching, but the favorite wish of seeing him was forgotten in that of recovering her.——I was presently environed by the hunters without regarding them, till their extreme solicitude obliged me to raise my eyes from the lifeless face of my daughter in acknowledgment. I perceived with a surprise even that moment could not conquer, that on each side of me stood a young man, adorned with the order of the garter, and so distinguishingly handsome, that I knew not which was the Prince of Wales, but turned from the one to the other with an air of wildness and stupor.—My looks, however, made little impression on the strangers, their whole attention being fixed on the inanimate form of my daughter.—

ter.—In truth, fortune had contrived to shew her to the utmost advantage. I had thrown up her veil to give her air, and bared her beautiful hands and arms, polished and white as Parian marble; the wild rings of her auburn hair played on her youthful face, as the yellow leaves of Autumn curl over a latter peach; whilst every feature, formed with a truth which might bear the nicest examination, perhaps only appeared more exquisitely regular from the absence of expression; and even her figure and attitude (leaning on her mother's knees) presented a perfect model for a sculptor. The assiduities of the strangers, together with my own, at length recalled her scattered senses. ——— She opened those eyes so dear to me, and fixing them for a moment on the two strangers, a rosy suffusion alone proved she saw them, with such quickness did she turn toward her mother; when beholding me to appearance unhurt, she lifted her soul to heaven in a glance of gratitude, and throwing her arms round

my neck, relieved her overcharged heart by weeping on my bosom. "An angel in mind as well as form!" exclaimed one of the strangers; "assure me, madam," continued he, "that this terror is the only ill consequence of my sudden approach, or I know not how I shall forgive it to myself." This address ascertaining the Prince of Wales, he became the sole object of my attention.———Ah, where shall I find words to endear to you, Madam, the royal youth my heart at once opened to adopt? Henry was yet but in the dawn of manhood, nevertheless his height was majestic, and his figure finished. The beauty of his features was their least charm—virtue herself seemed to sublime every happy lineament, and spare beholders the trouble of developing his character by conveying it in a glance. His manly voice united the firmness of his own sex with the sensibility of ours. A confusion of sad remembrances were at once presented with him to my mind; and the admiration he excited
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was strangely blended with regret.—I forgot that he had addressed me, and continued to contemplate him in silence; ever and anon turning my streaming eyes wildly from him to heaven, even then, my dilating heart bids me add, scarce changing the object. The amiable Henry, in whose nature sympathy was the prevailing sentiment, touched with a conduct so mysterious, almost forgot my daughter in turn, so wholly was he engrossed by me.—Informed of my unfortunate lameness by my attempting to rise, he immediately concluded it to be the consequence of the recent accident, and scarce was satisfied by my assurances of the contrary. Oh! as my eyes surveyed the superior soul, living, irradiated in the bright orbs of his, how did they stream at remembering that, had his father been born but to half his virtues, I might now have been cherished by affection—dignified by rank—unwidowed—unbroken—a stranger yet to sorrow!—My mother too—Most unhappy of parents as well as sovereigns! I had a

tear for thee at this interesting moment.

The respect due to strangers induced the Prince to conceal the curiosity my conduct could not fail to excite, but having informed himself from the attendants of my title, he addressed me by it, and insisted on conducting me home. I now understood the nobleman who had divided my first looks with the Prince, was the Viscount Rochester: that contemptible favorite of the King, celebrated only for his beauty.—The visible coldness of my air checked a forward insolence I observed in him, and obliged him to quit us on our arriving at home.

With what secret transport did my soul welcome a Stuart worthy that name, glorious for so many ages!—The Prince seemed delighted with his new acquaintances.—The soft reserve of my daughter's air—the deepening roses of her cheek, and the low accent of her harmonious voice, when politeness obliged her to answer the Prince, whose animated eyes reduced hers often to seek the
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ground, presented to my elated heart every symptom of that passion which alone endears the sufferings it occasions. A flow of happy spirits, new to my daughter, almost forgotten by myself, gave cheerfulness to the hour which Henry saw elapse with regret.

On this chance introduction was grounded an acquaintance a few days ripened into intimacy.—Led to distinguish the Prince alike by his own merit, and the ties of blood, which secretly allied me to him, it was with the tenderest satisfaction I beheld Henry cherish the inclination he had already conceived for my daughter: yet the dignity of his mind forbidding him to form an engagement he knew not how to fulfil, it was through me alone he addressed himself to her. Convinced it was in my power to prove her entitled even to such a lover, I suffered fate to take its course, attending only to prudence.

Conscious that Henry had hitherto moved in a very confined circle, I was aware that to extend it must draw much observation

fervation on those he favored. To guard therefore against the malice of surmise, I fixed on the hour of the Prince's visit for my daughter to ride out; and always received him alone. His attendants, who saw her regularly depart, were at a loss to imagine what could attach their royal master to the infirm widow of Lord Leicester. The charm was in truth simply affection.—The amiable Henry had early been accustomed to every kind of homage but that of the heart, and had too much sensibility not to feel the want he knew not how to supply. Deeply susceptible of the true regard I had conceived for him, impressed at once by my mind, my manners, and my mien, with the idea of mystery, and the desire of obtaining my confidence, it was only by his own candour he sought to gain upon mine. Slowly and by degrees he deigned to repose with me those regrets and anxieties from which the utmost indulgence of nature and fortune cannot exempt a single individual. He often lamented the dangerous distinction of being the first-born

born of his father's children, since it cost him every other—Separated almost in infancy from his parents——surrounded with mercenary sycophants, who sought to make their court to the reigning King by a partial representation or misconstruction of his actions, he had shot up unloved, uncherished, and seen those tender affections he was born to share, gradually center in that son from whom his parents had nothing to fear.——Nor were there wanting insidious flatterers equally ready to undermine his filial duty, by pointing out the weaknesses of his father, even where they were most likely to wound him. He had punished himself, he added, for yielding to these impressions by an absolute obedience to the authority of the King, but it was with grief he remembered that was now the only tie between them.—Nor would I wonder, he continued, it should be so, if I considered that, born as he was to imperial power, with an ardent passion for glory, he had hitherto been shut up in the narrow sphere of his own court, languishing away the
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flower of his youth, without a choice, a friend, or a pursuit:—till the infamous Carr should deign to decide what foreign Prince's bribe he would condescend to accept, and to what bigotted Papist he should sacrifice the son of his master.

While the admired Prince of Wales, the Idol of the people, the Heir of Empire, the endued of Heaven, thus confided to me the simple and rational griefs which clouded a fortune so brilliant, could I fail to meditate on the equality of Providence?—which graciously allots even to the lowest situation, some portion of happiness, and depresses the highest with the sad sense of misfortune.

It is the fatal peculiarity of youth to throw the strongest light on every secret grief, and waste away under an oppression imagination often doubles. To cure this propensity is therefore the province of experience. I sought to imbue the Prince's mind with the only principle mine had derived from all my sufferings:—That the noblest use we can make of under-

understanding is to convert it into happiness ; and that every talent which does not conduce to that great end, ought rather to be considered as a burthen than a blessing to the possessor.—That the mind, like the eye, ever magnifies the object of fear or aversion, which often, on a strict examination, excites no other sentiment than contempt.—In fine, that he was not at liberty to shew any other sense of his father's errors, than by presenting a faultless example in his own life ; and that, if he would have it without blemish, he must divert his taste from channels where it would meet with opposition, and turn it into those through which it might flow freely.—That the cultivation of the sciences would at once fill up the void in life ever so painful at his years, and attach to his welfare all who loved them ; a body whose influence was never known unless opposition called forth the powers of eloquence.

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The Prince had too much judgment not to see the utility of this counsel, and too much generosity not to value its candour: nevertheless, it was a language yet new to him.—Ingenuity had been exhausted to teach him to govern others, but to subdue himself was a lesson none had ventured to inculcate. How did I lament that a soul so ductile had in childhood been injudiciously delivered up to its own guidance, and suffered every day to imbibe some new prejudice, destined perhaps to mark the character through life; and which an upright and skilful monitor might so easily have eradicated!

The Prince could not be insensible to the maternal caution which induced me to send my daughter abroad whenever he honored me with a visit, yet the observation did not for some time appear to influence his conduct.—Satisfied with merely beholding her as he entered or departed, the desire of opening his heart to me seemed to supersede every other impression.

sion. Nevertheless, long reveries would follow the most accidental meeting, and long pauses intervene in the most interesting conversation; rendering it sufficiently obvious, that his mind labored with some project, hitherto suppressed either by pride or prudence.

Perhaps I should ever have wanted courage to open my lips on so delicate an occasion, had not my daughter complained to me that she was now become the universal object of attention; and that the suit who attended her were often rudely surrounded, and sometimes interrogated by such of the Prince's court as had not benefited by his example.—By going abroad unexpectedly with her, I found that she was not offended without reason, and sensible of my imprudence in thus risking her safety, I came to the resolution rather to abridge myself of the pleasure of the Prince's society, than purchase it by endangering my daughter.—I desired her to retire for awhile when Henry should visit me

me next, and ere he could account for the singularity of finding her at home, entered into the delicate explanation. With an acknowledged attachment to him, that I bore my child alone could have over-ruled, I submitted it to himself, whether I could too cautiously guard against a censure or insult she had no natural protector to resent.—The generous Henry paused for a few moments with irresolution, when suddenly collecting courage he broke silence.—“Will Lady Leicester pardon,” said he, “those obtrusive visits she has submitted to with so much complacency? Will she deign to become the confidant of the only incident in my life I have hid from her—will she listen with indulgence?”—He paused a moment, but, ere I could resolve how to answer, pursued the discourse——“Accustomed even from childhood to the ensnaring glances of the light and the lovely—led to imagine myself older than my years by the continual proposals for marrying me that have
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have constantly succeeded each other, it is not wonderful that a heart naturally susceptible should mature before its time. Among the many beautiful girls, who have already sought to attract me, I soon distinguished one, by whom my peace, my honor, my innocence became endangered: perhaps they had been lost, had I not found her selfish and ambitious. I need hardly inform you that this seducing fair one is the Countess of Effex!—Vain of her influence over me, she took pleasure in publishing it, and taught me early to blush for my choice; but I could not resolve to do so continually. I formed the bold resolution of contending with my own heart, and retired hither to recover it, or die. Lady Effex, enraged and humbled at this conduct, confirmed me in it, by attaching herself to Viscount Rochester: thus rendering it sufficiently obvious, she had never loved me.—Besotted with her beauty, that weak favorite is governed by her caprices, and him I was born to obey yields to those of Rochester. Al-

though I do not immediately perceive how Lady Essex means to effect her revenge, I am convinced that it is only maturing; and daily expect a blow, from which I know not how to guard myself. Under these circumstances how can I venture to involve your fate with mine?—How can I ask you to permit me to offer to your lovely daughter the heart which ever hovers near her?—Speak Madam—my happiness is in your hands—dare you risque your own to promote it?” While I listened to this sensible, this frank declaration of the Prince’s error, and his attachment, my fond heart found its first wish accomplished, and adopted at once the royal youth; solemnly vowing to share, without repining, every evil that might follow an alliance so dear: nor did I fail secretly to exult in my Mary’s hereditary right even to this distinction.

To cement the confidence between us, and convince the prince that his present choice was judicious, I resolved to confide to him the secret so long, so painfully preserved;

served ; and related my whole history. As I retraced its affecting incidents, I knew them to be so only by his eager, his generous sympathy ; so wholly was my own soul engrossed by the happy prospect he had opened before it.

The Prince of Wales acknowledged with joy the relationship I claimed ; and, to confirm all I had advanced, I offered him the long-saved testimonials, which he perused with silent reverence : then fixing his eyes, still impressed with that elevated sentiment, on mine, he gave utterance to the dictates of his heart.—“ Who would suppose,” exclaimed he, “ a fortitude so unexampled could possibly be combined with a frame delicate even to fragility !—May the misfortunes you have indelibly impressed on my memory, my more than mother, be the last of your life—May that being who directed my soul to cherish the admiration and esteem inspired by your lovely daughter, and matchless self, suffer the youth before you to supply to your heart, all it ought to have inherited—all it unhappily has

lost. Dear will be the moment when to the form of your angel mother my authority shall add the name, and that moment will hereafter, oh ! most honored of women, infallibly be mine."

While I listened to predictions so flattering, I almost believed them accomplished. In thy unblown youth, oh, royal Henry, was comprised every promise that could dilate or fill the heart : mine centred at once in thee, and my daughter : finding in the mere hope of so glorious a union, a total suspension from suffering and sorrow.

I had now no reserves with the Prince, and leading in my blushing Mary presented her to her royal cousin ; who gracefully offered up his unblemished soul on the hand he bowed over. So pure a transport took possession of mine as obliterated every other impression. I snatched the united hands so dear, so beloved, and pressing them to my bosom, sickened with very ecstasy, and withdrew to recover myself.—Wandering alone by
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the side of the Thames, I raised my full eyes to heaven ; and called the happy spirits of my mother, sister, and Lord Leicester, to sympathize with me in an event which promised to end the persecutions of my family, by thus blessedly uniting the last sprung branches of it. A serenity of the sublimest nature succeeded the sweet trouble of my spirits, and enabled me to rejoin the youthful lovers with the dignity due to my own character.

The situation in which we stood endeared us still more to the Prince, by perpetually reminding him how intimately our welfare was connected with his own. Every hour seemed to unite us more and more to each other. Henry spoke to me with the freedom of a son ; conjuring me not to take any step that would create the least suspicion of my birth, or the secret tie formed between us, till he had well weighed every consequence that might ensue : and, to elude the watchful spies, with whom we were alike surrounded, he proposed passing in the evening through his garden to ours, if I would deign for

a while to allow him thus to reach the saloon. Our situation was too delicate not to require the strictest caution, yet as I could discover no mode of receiving the Prince, which was not equally questionable, and more dangerous, I acquiesced in his proposal, as well as that he should render one of his gentlemen (Sir David Murray) a confidant of this intimacy, though not of its nature, or extent.

An incident so important engrossing my every thought, my heart returned once more eagerly into the world. It had now an interest in fully understanding the real characters of the King, the Queen, Viscount Rochester, and every individual likely or intitled to interfere at this interesting crisis—I examined, considered, and weighed every thing. I soon discovered that the whole royal family were at variance ! That the imperious Queen, unable to wrest her husband from his favorites, or her son from his duties, scorned the first, and neglected the latter ; confining herself wholly to a
court

court formed of her own creatures, who assisted her to spoil her younger son ; whom she had almost estranged from his brother. Her beautiful daughter, who united in her own person the graces of Mary with the spirit of Elizabeth, alone allured to the court of the Queen the few persons of merit it afforded. Henry was often lavish in the praises of his sister, and, as she was the only relation he ever voluntarily spoke of, I naturally concluded that she was the only one intitled by superior qualities to that distinction. King James, who had mounted the throne under happier auspices than almost any preceding sovereign of England, had already lived long enough to lose the affections of his people. By turns a pedant and a buffoon, his solemnity was even more disgusting than his levity. Governed by a predilection of the most absurd and singular nature, to a beautiful favorite he always delivered up the reins of empire ; readily submitting to a shameful subjection in all important points, provided he might enjoy a ridiculous su-

premacy in his hours of indulgence and retirement. From such a weak and inconsistent King, and his profligate Ministers, the wise, the scientific, and the good, had gradually retreated ; and, in neglect and silence, contemplated from far the growth of that exemplary Prince, who promised to retrieve the fame of his ancestors, and the glory of the kingdom he was born to reign over. A youth of eighteen capable of uniting the unblemished virtues of that age, with the discernment of a maturer one, was a phenomenon, and of course either adored or detested—While the body of the kingdom regarded the Prince of Wales only with the first sentiment, the worthless favorites of his father were actuated solely by the latter.

To marry and escape the plans of Rochester was the interest of Henry ; and to marry without his father's knowledge his unwilling choice.—Yet highly sensible of the slavery imposed by his rank, he had resisted every temptation from beauties of an inferior one :—but, when apprized of my story, he saw, or fancied he saw,

saw, in my daughter, a wife allotted him by heaven—one to whom no just objection could possibly be made; one born to give happiness to his heart, and honor to his name. Nor could he doubt, even if his father shut his eyes against the truth, but that he should be able to convince the people of my birth, when the publication of the marriage should give my story the whole weight of his credence.

Success, in his judgment, depended solely on the concealment of the purposed union till it could be accomplished; for, if the intention transpired ere the event, he was satisfied the most desperate efforts would be made to wrest us from him. Yet as at this very period a public treaty was negotiating with a foreign Prince, he could not form a tie of such importance without giving his father just cause of offence, the nation at large a contempt for his character, and the distant Sovereign thus insulted a mortal disgust. We therefore agreed to wait till this Ministerial project like many others should disappoint itself, and seize that moment to celebrate

celebrate and publish a marriage, which was to end all our fears, and complete all our hopes.

During this interval I observed with pain that the extreme timidity of my daughter's character prevailed over the enthusiasm incident to her years ; and damped with vague apprehensions those moments love and hope might have made so happy. I saw this little feminine weakness with extreme uneasiness. The Prince of Wales was distinguished by a manly firmness, which ever wisely weighed the approaching trial, then calmly dared it. For a soul so noble, I desired to find a faultless bride ; and looking fearfully into the future, I sometimes thought my Mary's timid heart would one day throb without cause against that of a sovereign oppressed with innumerable cares, he perhaps sought to lose the remembrance of in her society. Nevertheless, I did not perceive my tender admonitions on this subject had any other consequence than that of inducing my daughter to bury in her bosom those sentiments and emotions,

tions, I had so many years delighted to participate.

It was now autumn !——The time of the King's periodical progresses.——The Prince could not avoid following his father, but he lingered in his duty ; and having staid a day too long with us, hastened to overtake the King, whom he was to feast at Woodstock. He wrote to me from thence, complaining of fatigue and lassitude ; but, with his usual attention, informed me that he was in treaty for Kenilworth Castle ; where he flattered himself I should again see golden days, like those I still remembered with so much pleasure.

Alas, the few he had irradiated were quickly hastening to a period ! At the first visit he paid me on his return, my soul was struck with a very apparent alteration in his person ; which was grown thin and wan beyond conception, considering the shortness of the time. Not all the joy he expressed at our meeting could satisfy me that he was either well or happy ; but, observing he evaded my questions, and fearful of alarm-
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ing him without reason, I strove to suppress that maternal anxiety which all his assurances of health and cheerfulness could not dispel. I perceived my daughter was impressed with the same idea, for, though she spoke not, it was visible to me that she wept greatly when alone.

The evenings were now too short and damp for me to allow the evening visits of the Prince; and I rather chose to risque every danger by receiving him openly, than subject him to any by an ill-judged caution.—Alas, these cares were vain.—The rapid decay of the royal Henry's health became visible even to indifferent spectators. An affecting languor was the only expression of those fine eyes once so full of fire, and the youthful cheeks every following day should have tinged with a deeper bloom, grew more and more wan and hollow—He could no longer conceal his illness. Alas, it pierced me to the soul! I was miserable at remembering a charge so precious, as his welfare, should be committed to servants of whatever denomination.

nation.—No mother—no sister—duties indispensable in every other rank of life, were it seems incompatible with royalty. Oh, Henry!—dear amiable youth! even yet am I tempted to accuse myself for not having better deserved the tender appellation thy filial reverence so often bestowed on me, by daring every thing for thy sake! Slaves to imperious custom, our actions are too often regulated by that idle multitude, whose most lavish applauses would but ill console us for one single reproach from that unerring monitor, our own conscience.

Either not convinced that this secret malady was undermining his constitution, or indifferent to the event, the Prince still continued in the pursuit of his usual athletic exercises and habits, till his strength became wholly unequal to them. I once more persuaded him to call in medical assistance, and he promised to attend to himself as soon as his sister and the elector should depart.—Obliged to appear at the celebration of their marriage in London, he came to pay us a parting visit.

fit. Impressed, perhaps, with the idea that it would be the last, he threw himself into my arms, and shed there the first tears I had ever seen fall from his eyes.—Mine readily overflowed—a grief too deep for utterance pressed upon my soul, and Henry recovered ere I could. His heart missed my daughter, who was gone abroad.—He sighed, sunk into a little reverie, and breaking it, with a faint smile, said, “he ought rather to congratulate himself on her absence.” He sighed again, and, after another pause, resumed his discourse in a low and broken voice.—

“Mourn not thus, my mother (for I will still give you a title you may justly claim from her who bore me; since who ever loved me as you have done?) I have youth in my favor, and this oppressive malady may not be mortal: for your sake alone do I wish it to be otherwise, believe me.—Already weary, disgusted with this world, I could retreat from it almost without a pang, did I not know my loss would be to you an irremediable calamity. Yet who shall judge of the dispensations
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of the Almighty?—I might fulfil all your wishes without seeing you happy—I might obtain all my own without ceasing to be wretched. Recall this often to your memory, whatever follows our parting; and remember your name will be ever on these lips while they have power to utter a sound.—For the adored of my soul—but she is surely become a part of it; and if not permitted to possess her in this world, I will expect her in a better.”—Perceiving his dim eye was fixed on a picture of my daughter which hung at my bosom, I presented it to him.—

“And do you too, beloved Henry,” returned I, in a broken voice, “remember that the mother who gives you this, would have comprised in the original every grace, every virtue, to be found through human nature: and having done so, would still have thought her honoured in your choice.—Ah! royal youth! resign not a heart so noble to vapourish depression.—Your life, your happiness, are not your own merely—a nation is born to pray for the former, to crown you with the

the latter.—For myself—upon the sweet hope of matching my daughter with you, of sharing the soft transports of mutual virtue and affection, I have learnt to live, but surely I could never survive its extinction.”—My full soul allowed not of another syllable. The Prince fixed his suffused eyes on mine, with a mysterious melancholy, almost amounting to despair, and touching with his lips those hands his trembling ones still grasped, rushed precipitately into the court yard. The sound of his voice drew me towards the window——the graceful youth made me a last obeisance and galloped away ; while my partial eye pursued him till beyond its reach, and even then my ear seemed to distinguish the feet of his horse.

With his usual kind consideration Henry wrote to me the next day, that he found himself better ; and, in the pleasure of seeing his sister happy, felt reconciled to the impolitic match made for her.—He even assisted at the various festivals with which the nuptials of the royal Elizabeth were honored ; but scarce were they

they over, when his health and spirits failed at once, and the faculty were called in to his aid. A malady which had been so long engrafting itself on his constitution, left but little hope of his life;—I had ceased to entertain any: yet, far from supporting the idea of losing him with fortitude, my soul mourned as if it then had first known sorrow. Not daring to give free vent to my apprehensions in the presence of my daughter, I strove with cold and watery smiles to flatter those hopes in her heart my own had long rejected, and saw with vain regret, the deep excesses of a sensibility I had laboured to excite and strengthen.

What days, what nights of sadness and suspense were ours, while the unfortunate Henry was languishing away every vital power ere yet they had reached maturity!—Frequently delirious, our names escaped unconsciously from those lips, which at his lucid intervals, uttered only sighs and groans. Murray, his beloved attendant, gave us constant information of the progress of his fever; nor did the

amiable Henry fail at intervals to charge him with tender remembrances. Sir David at length acquainted me that, as the impassioned delirium of the Prince pointed ever toward us, the King had been apprized of it ;—that he had minutely questioned his son's most favoured attendants, and among them himself, on the origin, progress, and strength, of an attachment thus suddenly and strangely brought to light, deeply ruminating on all he heard. "I could not feel acquitted to myself, madam," concluded the faithful Murray, "were I to conceal this, nor dare I add a surmise on so delicate an occasion."

"Ah, of what importance to us are all the late inquiries, the vague conjectures of James !" cried I, folding my daughter to my bosom ; "if heaven deprives us of his inestimable son, neither his love or his hatred can greatly affect us.—Beloved Mary—dear inheritor of misfortune !—widowed ere yet thou art a wife, a long obscurity, a solitary youth is all thy portion—a sorrow which can never end thy
mother's

mother's—But why should I hesitate to avow myself?—Wherefore should I not publish claims which even tyranny cannot cancel; but perhaps it will not dispute? The timid, abject spirit of James knows not how to contend with one firm in virtue—immutable in truth.—Ah, had I done so long since, I might at this moment, dear Henry, have hovered near thy couch, and softened the anguish no mortal can prevent!—Perhaps the King already surmises the fact—let him demand it.”

Sir David Murray's next letter breathed the very spirit of despair.——“Prepare yourself, madam,” said he, “for the worst; perhaps, ere this reaches you, England will have lost its dearest hope, the royal Henry's friends their only one. The most desperate efforts of art have failed, and exhausted reason often now revisits with a languid ray the noble heart she is so soon to quit for ever. The Prince has just ordered me to commit to the flames every letter and paper in which

you are mentioned :—a sure proof that he has given himself up.—Alas, he knows not how often names so dear have escaped him ; he has called for you, madam, and your angelic daughter, almost the whole night, but frequently recollecting himself, has waved his feeble hand, and sighed out no——no——no.”

Three hours after, another express arrived.—“ Pardon, madam, the haste and incoherency of scrawls penned at so trying a moment.—Alas, the most sanguine of the household has now ceased to hope.—Our royal master’s speech entirely fails him—his last effort was hastily and repeatedly to call me—I flew to his bedside ; but, though my every sense seemed to resolve into ear, I found it impossible to understand him—either I widely erred or he named France ; perhaps I commit a second error in supposing he referred to you, madam, but I voluntarily risque every thing to fulfil the parting wish of a master so adored. The King, the physicians, all have taken a long leave of
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the almost beatified Prince ; and there is nothing left for those who love him best to wish ; but that his pure spirit may pass away in peace."

The agony and stupor this affecting billet occasioned, were hardly abated when another arrived.——"It is all over, madam," concluded the worthy Murray, "raise your streaming eyes to heaven ; it is there alone you can now look for the incomparable Prince of Wales.—Fatigue and anguish disable me from saying more."

{ It was not till the awful moment which restored the un sullied soul of Henry to its omniscient Creator, that I had dared to breathe a wish of which he was not the object, or allowed my thoughts to pass beyond himself.—That exquisite sensibility which lives through all dear to us, had made me severely suffer with him, and consequently pray for that release which alone seemed likely to give him ease ; nor did I recollect till he was gone for ever, the void his loss would leave in

my hopes.—The tremendous calm, by which death is ever followed, now took its turn. Bereft of a support on which I had long unconsciously rested, I sunk into a desolation which made me almost wish to follow the lamented Prince.—It is at these intervals, madam, we become most truly sensible of all the imperfections of our nature.—How often had I flattered my own erring heart with the vain belief that it had acquired strength, purity, and virtue, from its various trials! alas, what but pride, vanity, and ambition, still throbbed unalterably there! time had only altered the object, not the passion, and centred them all in my daughter.

We shut ourselves entirely up, and deeply joined in the general mourning. The sad pleasure of knowing him we bewailed, universally lamented, was yet ours. I perused, I appropriated, with a mother's fondness, the lavish eulogies, all sects, all parties, all poets, graced the memory of the Prince with:—it was the only
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mitigation my grief could know.—A considerable time had elapsed without our hearing any thing from Murray, in confirmation of his conjecture concerning Henry's last wish, and the imperfect accents which lingered on his dying lips.—But though I could not resolve to become a guiltless fugitive even in compliance with Prince Henry's will, I had had no other motive for remaining in England than to shew that I was not driven out of it. I now determined to quit a country which had been the grave of a hope so dear, and found my daughter entirely of my mind. In gratitude for the unwearied attention of Sir David Murray, I informed him “of my intention to retire into Flanders, not doubting but that the Hollanders would afford an honorable asylum to the widow and orphan of Lord Leiceſter.—I beſought him to accept a ring of conſiderable value in token of my deep ſenſe of the generous attachment he had ſhewn alike to myſelf, and that incomparable Prince whoſe loſs was ever preſent to my mind; and requeſted—

as a last proof of his regard, the restoration of that picture of my daughter I had given to the royal Henry at our memorable parting."

The answer of Murray strangely startled and alarmed me.——"Your intention of quitting England, madam," said he, "relieves my mind from extreme anxiety;—time and circumstances have united to convince me that I did not misunderstand the last imperfect accents of my much-loved master.—Lose not a moment in hastening to the asylum you have fixed on.—The picture, madam, is, I fear, irretrievably gone—I cannot by either bribes or intreaties procure any tidings of it.—*Power*, alas, I now have not!—If ever it comes to my hands, rely on its being restored by him who will ever devoutly pray for your happiness."

This inexplicable letter roused every dormant faculty.—Wherefore should my retiring abroad relieve the mind of a person unconnected with me *from extreme anxiety*?—Why should he urge thus my departure? As it was rather
pride

pride than prudence which induced me to seek a country where I might fearlessly assert my every right, that project was now rejected from the very motive which first dictated it.—A mystery my nature ever disdained. Resolved to comprehend all the motives on which Murray wished me to act, I ordered every thing to be replaced, and sat down once more quietly at home; resolved to brave the storm, if indeed there was any gathering, rather than ascertain my safety by a disgraceful flight. I once more wrote to Sir David, acquainting him with my present conduct, and its reasons, insisting on being fully informed of those which actuated him to offer me advice so singular and mysterious.—How infinitely was my impatience, curiosity, and disdain, heightened by his answer!——“I hear with admiration, madam, a determination which from a perfect knowledge of your character, I ought, perhaps, to have foreseen; nevertheless, my sentiments are not altered, nor less urged, could I divulge the reasons

reasons on which they are grounded : but decorum and delicacy give way to your commands, and the occasion. Nevertheless, I find it impossible to commit them to paper.—Dare you give me admission at midnight ?—I shall be near your gate upon the chance, but be wary in the choice of my conductor, as perhaps my life, nay, even your own, depends upon its being supposed you never had any private correspondence or communication with me.”

How did my nature take fire at this incomprehensible letter !—Me to stoop to secrecy !—to be exposed to shame !—The unknown danger, with which he represented me to be environed, appeared wholly indifferent ; so exquisitely sensible was my soul of the imputation of dishonor.—At times I resolved to shut out Murray, and leave the brooding mischief to disclose itself by its effects ; but love for my daughter controlling the strong spirit of indignation inseparable from innocence, I yielded to the suggestions

tions of prudence, and prepared to admit him.—Inured to every other species of suffering, I knew not how to blush before any human being.

My perplexed and agitated mind passed through the infinitude of possibilities without fixing upon one.—At times I imagined all the caution of the royal Henry had been insufficient, and that the King, by means of some lost or secreted letter, had been fully apprized of his son's attachment to us, and the hopes that were grounded upon it; though even then I knew not why my life should be in the question; still less could I imagine it endangered, had his discoveries reached farther, and traced out the long buried secret of my birth. Involved in busy, vague, and alarming conjectures, I hardly knew how to wait with any patience for the singular hour appointed to ascertain them.

Sensible, by the deep effect this took on my own mind, that it must dreadfully shock my daughter's, and still flattering myself

myself that this indistinct danger might be the creation of a desponding temper in Henry's favorite, I resolved to wait the event of my midnight interview with Murray, ere I confided more to my Mary than she must already have learnt from the change in my resolution respecting quitting England.—But as to see her was to explain all, (for how could I hope to veil emotions which burnt indignantly on my cheek ?) I sent her word that I was seized with a violent head-ach, which I would endeavour to remedy by sleep ; and accompanied this message with a new book she had an eager desire to see, and which I sincerely prayed might wholly occupy her attention at this interesting crisis.

Oh, world ! how false, how erroneous are the feelings we imbibe from thee !—Nature ordained shame to be the companion of guilt, but overbearing custom has broke that tye, and oftener bids her follow virtue. Scarce could I resolve to know my imputed crime, or look with complacency on the amiable man who had

had ventured to suggest the unforeseen danger.—It was the utmost effort of my reason to govern this unworthy impulse.

The estimable Murray was sensible of an equal constraint, and, by the generous confusion with which he appeared before me, restored my mind to its dignity and composure. His mourning, and the tears which followed the name of his lost royal master, drew forth mine, and at once blended our feelings. Sir David, with infinite delicacy and address, entered into the Prince of Wales's singular illness, as well as the various opinions his death had given rise to :—but how did my soul freeze with horror to learn that there were many (and among them some of his physicians) who believed him poisoned ! The killing grief such a suspicion must at a more tranquil moment have caused, vanished, however, at once before the confused and rapid sensations his following discourse occasioned.—Oh, let me pause here a moment to adore the
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indulgence of the Almighty, which alone could have enabled my intellects to support so terrible a shock as the report that it was from my hands he received the deadly present!—I looked at Murray awhile in speechless astonishment!—Anger, shame, and horror, divided and tore me in pieces.—I scarce heard his prayers and adjurations, but, pushing him from my feet, shut up every indignant sense in my swelling heart, and only hoped it might burst with the deep convulsion.

A considerable time elapsed ere I was enough recovered to inquire into the origin of so black and malicious a calumny. I then conjured him to inform me who was supposed to be its diabolical author.—To this he answered, that when the equivocal decision of the faculty respecting the cause of the Prince's death first reached the Queen, the vehemence of her grief, as well as that of her temper, made her instantly join with those who pronounced him poisoned.—This doubt was no sooner published than it

it became general; every domestic of the Prince's household became by turns the object of suspicion to his fellows, and some of them had been weak enough to ascertain their safety by quitting the kingdom. The rumour was by this means corroborated and strengthened; but, as nothing transpired that could authorize a judicial inquiry, the King became satisfied that the melancholy catastrophe of his youthful heir had been in the common course of nature; when, all at once, by some incomprehensible means, the vague suspicions of the multitude, which were far from extinguished, though wholly unfixed, revived with added force, and centred in me. It was now generally reported that the Prince of Wales, in the last visit he paid me, had tasted some dry preserves (a little refreshment of which he was extremely fond, though fortunately the distraction of my mind at that period had prevented me from offering him any) which most likely were poisoned, as his last illness rapidly increased immediately after. It was well

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known that I had been the constant object of his delirious reveries ; and every vague or myſterious expreſſion which had eſcaped him at thoſe intervals, had been remembered, traced, and applied with diabolical ingenuity. The ſingular precaution of his chooſing to ſee his own papers burnt had ſerved only to perſuade the prejudiced multitude that the unfortunate Prince was unwilling to ſtigmatize her who had deſtroyed him. By ſuch plausible and baſe ſuggeſtions the eyes of an inflamed and afflicted nation had been led towards the ſolitary dwelling, where, unconſcious of danger, I remained buried in a grief the moſt charitable imputed only to remorse. There wanted but little to incite the people to anticipate the ſtroke of juſtice, by tearing me to pieces, when the King confirmed the general ſuſpicion by a renewed and more minute inquiry into the nature of his ſon's viſits to me, their continuance, and deſign : no perſon being able to ſatiſfy his curioſity, he dropt harſh and ambiguous expreſſions ; and that ſeveral of his favorites had ſince
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urged the propriety of bringing me to a public trial ; a measure which had the whole weight of the Queen's interest. Alarmed and uncertain how to proceed, Sir David had understood at this very juncture my intention of retiring into Holland ; and, by supposing me pre-acquainted with the slanders of the public, had unwarily reduced himself to the painful necessity of repeating them.—He concluded with hinting the prudence of abiding by my former design of immediately quitting England, as in instances where the prejudices of a nation infected even those individuals intrusted with the execution of its laws, innocence itself was scarce a protection : biassed judges might easily mistake presumptions for proofs, nor have candour enough to vindicate the honor which had thus been questioned.

While Sir David yet spoke, a new world displayed itself before me:—Ah ! how unlike the paradise pictured by my guiltless mind !—Those countenances in
 VOL. III. T which

which I yesterday saw only the living image of their Creator, now glared upon me like so many fiends.—A horrible gulph seemed to open beneath my feet, into which a thousand hands sought at once to precipitate me, and my timid soul retreated in vain from the danger.—To live undistinguished—to die unknown, were mortifications sufficiently grievous.—But the bare idea of being arraigned—dragged as a pre-judged criminal before a partial judge, had something in it so tremendous, as made every other evil appear ease. My blood flowed impetuously through my frame, and my bewildered judgment wanted strength to govern the torrent.—A malice so bold, profound and diabolical, could have only one author, but where to look for that one I knew not; nor could I recollect a human being I had injured, or a villain I had provoked.—Like a wretch, awakened by assassins in the darkness of midnight, I knew not but that the hand raised to ward the blow might bleed on the

pre-

presented dagger. In this terrible conjuncture I had only virtue to befriend me: though, alas, virtue herself half withers before the blighting breath of calumny! While Sir David enforced the arguments he had already urged to induce me to quit the kingdom, my soul, by one of those violent exertions great occasions will sometimes produce, recovered all her powers.—Indignation subsided at once into fortitude, and anger into heroism.—“You have hitherto only seen me, Sir David,” said I,—“it is now alone I can be known to you;—shuddering with horror at the imputations you have explained, I yet dare not retreat unless I can confute them—no, not even condemnation could induce me to fly, and leave my honor behind me.—What! shall I blight the opening virtues of my child, by exposing her with myself to unmerited censure? The pride, the pleasure, of unsullied virtue, was all fortune permitted me to retain of the wealth and honors which once glittered before

my youthful eyes—nor did I undervalue the most dear and sacred of all possessions—alas, even that is now ravished from me, and one way alone can it be retrieved.—Desperate as the effort seems, it must be ventured—yes—I will see the King whatever it costs me: surely, the fainted spirit of the royal Henry would appear to vindicate my innocence (heavens! that I should live to know it questioned!) were every other means to prove insufficient.—I will trouble you no farther, respected Murray, unless you will deign to convey a letter to Lord Rochester, requesting a private audience of the King.”

An idea so singular transferred the astonishment Murray had at first excited in me to his own mind; that my intellects were touched then seemed to him very probable, but perceiving that I was mistress both of my senses and temper, he presumed not to contend with a spirit injury had nerved: and, struck with the dignity I assumed, began to believe I
had

had indeed something important to disclose, though quite at a loss respecting its nature. I wrote to Lord Rochester (now newly created Earl of Somerset) according to the idea I had formed ; and Murray, having engaged that the letter should be delivered early in the morning, departed with the same caution with which he had entered, leaving me alone.—Alone, did I say ?—Ah, gracious heaven, never was I less so !—The shades of all I had ever loved seemed to gather round me on this interesting occasion, and volumes of obscure ideas rushed impetuously through my brain.—I had unexpectedly reached the very point of my fate.—That important moment so often delayed, so eternally dreaded, was at length arrived, and the long treasured secret on the verge of being published.—For myself I had long ceased to fear—The fraternal acknowledgment of the King could now add nothing to my happiness ; since, alas, that incomparable youth was gone for whose sake

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alone

alone I desired it : nor could his rejection greatly imbitter a fate which had left me so little to hope.—But, oh, when I remembered that his single breath might blight the tender blossom I had exhausted my very being to rear—precipitate my youthful Mary, ere yet her virtues were known, into an obscure and dishonorable grave, where, where, could I gather strength to cope with this idea ?

I employed the remainder of the night in collecting and arranging such plausible reasons as should amuse my daughter's mind till the event was known ; thus sparing her all the pangs of suspense.—I gathered together likewise every paper, and proof which could authenticate the rights I was compelled to avow, and, on perusing them once more, found such reason to be assured, not only of safety, but distinction, that a sacred calm succeeded to all the transports of grief and indignation with which I had of late been agitated.

By

By a feigned invitation from a neighbouring lady, who permitted me to render her house my convenience, I sent my daughter abroad for the day ; and scarce had done so ere an express arrived, to acquaint me that the Earl of Somerset would wait on me in the afternoon.

What were my proud emotions when the upstart Somerset littered my court with a princely retinue !—Alas, the only Prince who had ever entered it, with a noble consciousness, despised such idle parade. By oppressive offers of service the Earl made me sensible of his importance, and sought, by unbounded adulation, to gain upon my heart, and dive into its intentions : but it was not by such a medium I sought distinction. I politely avoided referring either to the slander, or the purport of the requested audience, and only thanked him for having obtained me the ear of the King ; half blushing to have gained it by so contemptible an intercessor. I perceived chagrin, curiosity, and disappointment, strongly expressed in his really fine features, but I

could not prevail on myself to confide aught to the man Prince Henry had despised. The Earl took his leave with the same profound deference, and assurances of service, with which he entered; having appointed the next morning for presenting me to the King.

As the privacy of the promised audience enabled me to dispense with form, I made no addition to my servants, nor any other alteration in the weeds I usually wore, than that of forming them to the model of my mother's dress; which ever rendered the likeness I bore her from my very birth striking and obvious. A thousand half-forgotten occurrences pressed upon my agitated soul as I past through each well-known apartment till all were lost in the present, by my reaching the closet of the King. The assiduous Somerset, dressed as elegantly as though he had meant to charm me, advanced on my being announced, and politely offered his hand——a sudden chill came over me;——I trembled——lingered——drooped,

drooped,—but resolved to conquer myself or perish, I shook off the scalding tear which hung upon my cheek, and accepted the favorite's introduction.——

The superior air with which I affected to enter was not necessary towards confusing the King, who, always awkward and perplexed, seemed more than usually so ; and doubtful, whether he should not fly the moment he saw me, or at least call back Somerset who had instantly retired.——

Bending my knee in compliance with custom, I instantly rose, and, retaining the hand he had presented to me, fixed my eyes, strongly animated by the occasion, upon his ever-varying countenance.

“Your Majesty,” said I, “doubtless, expects to find in me a weak suppliant, soliciting protection, or suing for your pity ; but on terms like these I had never bent before you—I come to claim a dear and sacred title hitherto unknown, but never annihilated. Does your heart, oh, royal James !” added I, melting into tears, “recognize nothing congenial to it in these features ? this voice ! the timorous

morous hand which grasps yours for the first time, in fraternal alliance?—Oh, fainted Mary! dear author of my being, look down from heaven, and touch the heart of your son, in favor of the desolate sister who now stands before him.” The King started, receded, gave manifest tokens of doubt and displeasure, and sought to draw away the hand I obstinately retained.—I kissed, I bathed it with impassioned tears. “Shake me not off, reject me not unknown,” resumed I in the deep tone of stifled anguish.—“It is neither pride, vanity, or ambition, which induces me now to publish a secret so long buried in my bosom. By the ashes of our anointed mother, I conjure you to hear—nay even to believe me.—Born in obscurity—reared in solitude, the early victim of misfortune, long suffering had reconciled my weary soul to every evil but disgrace: against that she still proudly revolts.—The same blood which flows through your veins, burns in tumults along mine,

mine, at the very thought of aught unworthy—it urges me to assert my innocence by indubitable proofs—it *will* be acquitted, before men as well as angels ; nor does the claim thus avowed rest on my declaration alone, your Majesty will see in these papers the solemn attestations, the unquestioned handwriting of your royal mother ; in *these* you will find the corroborating testimonies of many noble and unblemished persons.—Peruse them cautiously, and oh, beware how you pre-judge me !” Unable to utter another word, I almost sunk at the feet of James, and gave way to the oppressive, the agonizing sensations such an æra in my life could not fail to awaken. The King still regarded me with an irresolute, uneasy air, coldly advising me to compose myself by retiring into the anti-chamber, while he perused the papers on which he had hitherto only glanced his eye ; though even that cursory view had deeply tinged his cheek with silent conviction. I was met in the

outer room by the Earl of Somerset, who, perceiving me near fainting, ordered water and such essences as are customary, remaining himself by my side, as if ostentatiously to convince me that he did not influence in the least the determination of his royal master.—The bitterness of the conflict was, however, over the moment the secret was avowed, and my spirits soon began to recover their wonted equanimity.

The obliging efforts of Somerset to revive me did not pass unnoticed, though my watchful ear followed the footsteps of the King, who still continued to walk about with an unequal pace, stopping at intervals. He opened the closet door at length, and Somerset retiring out of his sight, made signs to me to re-enter it.—The King came forward to meet me with affability, and seizing my hand slightly saluted my cheek.——“Take courage, madam,” said he, “for however you may have surpris’d us with this sudden declaration, and wonderful discovery,

covery, reverence for our deceased mother's rights, and justice to those you derive from her, oblige us to acknowledge you as her daughter."

And now I was indeed near fainting, I might rather say dying.—To be at once acknowledged as the sister of James, as the daughter of Mary! Hardly in my happiest hours had I dared to flatter myself with the promise of what was now so incredibly realized. My susceptible soul indulged the exquisite transport, and one short moment compensated for ages of anguish.—A thousand impassioned, incoherent exclamations, burst from my lips; and giving way to the genuine impulse of gratitude and affection, I threw myself for the first time into the arms of a brother, nor remembered that they were those of a King. Never did the most consummate hypocrite counterfeit a joy so pure, so perfect; and though I could have brought no other proof of my birth, the sacred throbs of nature might well have ascertained it.

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The King sat down by me, and, turning over the papers he still held, questioned me at intervals respecting those that appeared mysterious or deficient. I entreated his patience while I briefly ran through the wonderful events of my life, and thus very naturally led his attention toward the sole object of my cares, my hopes, my existence.——“ I have already heard much of your daughter,” said James ; “ they tell me she is beauty itself—why have you thus strangely concealed her ?” As I could not declare my real reason, which was simply want of esteem for his character, I pleaded various trifling ones, that indeed had never influenced me. “ Say no more,” said the King, interrupting me, “ I easily perceive, Madam, you was not so reserved to every one—I plainly discern who was your confidant ; had I earlier been entrusted with your secret, it would have been happier for all, and I should then have been able to account for”—He paused ere he came to the dear name of his son, and sighing

fighting dropt the unfinished sentence. As to me, entranced alike with his unexpected candour, graciousness, and generosity, I severely reproached myself for relying on report, and not proving the character I ventured to decide upon. I had a long conversation with the King afterwards, every word of which heightened my confidence, esteem, and affection. I gathered from many expressions, that he feared opposition on the part of the Queen, and his favorite ; and was fearful that this late declaration of his mother's marriage with the Duke of Norfolk would not fully satisfy the minds of the people, or establish my rank sufficiently. He paused upon the whole, with the air of one who has a party in what he meditates ; and I thought the least I could do, was to leave the regulation of the important acknowledgment in his choice.—To be vindicated in his opinion, I truly assured him, was the first object of my life, and I submitted my general vindication, in the public acknowledgment of my birth, entirely

tirely to his better judgment. That I
 had been so many years a solitary being in
 the midst of society, as not to have one
 friend to whose inclination I need yield my
 own. In fine, that time had gradually
 robbed me of all parties interested in the
 important secret I had just confided to
 him, which now rested solely with him,
 my daughter, and myself. He replied
 that "this instance of my prudence, as
 well as regard, infinitely heightened the
 partiality he had already conceived for
 me; nor need I fear his delaying the
 acknowledgment longer than was abso-
 lutely necessary, since he could not but
 look on such relations as inestimable ac-
 quisitions: nevertheless, as he had many
 points to consider, and many persons to
 reconcile, he recommended to me to
 continue the same circumspection I had
 hitherto shewn; but that he could not
 restrain his impatience to behold the fair
 maid of whom he had heard so much,
 and would come to-morrow evening to
 a seat of Lord Somers's, whither he
 would

would send for myself and my daughter, and hoped by that time he should be able to ascertain the day for publishing my birth, with a due regard for his mother's honor; after which he could gratify himself by establishing me in a situation that should make me forget all my misfortunes."—Those misfortunes were already forgotten in the unhopèd-for transition in my fate.—I took my leave with the most profound gratitude, burning with impatience to impart this blessed news to my Mary; and, as the King did not offer to return the papers, I thought it better to leave them in his hands, than confirm the doubt my long silence could not but give rise to in his mind, viz. that I wanted confidence in his honor.

I hastened to Richmond, and communicated this surprising, this happy event, to my darling girl.—A thousand times I enfolded her to my delighted heart, and found every transport doubled in her participation. She tenderly entered into

all my feelings, and sweetly smiled at the eagerness with which I sought to adorn her for the next day's introduction. Yet, considering the King as the slave of exterior, it was a material point to heighten her beauty by every adventitious advantage. To present her in absolute black, was to recal the most melancholy impressions to the mind of James; I therefore resolved to lighten her mourning with a fanciful elegance. I dressed her in a vest of black velvet thrown back at the bosom in the French fashion, with a semicircle of rich lace points, which shewed at once her graceful waist and chest to the greatest advantage. Her petticoat was of white satin, wrought in deep points round the bottom with black velvet, and richly fringed with silver. A fuller coat and train of silver muslin, wrought with black, fell over the satin one, and was looped up to the waist at regular distances by strings of pearl, and dragged toward the bottom into points by the weight of rich

rich black bugle tassels and roses of diamonds. Full sleeves of the same silver muslin were braced above the elbow by strings of jet, and roses of diamonds; and from thence her arms were bare, except for similar bracelets circling each wrist. The rich profusion of her auburn hair, which fell in natural curls below her waist, required no ornament, but to avoid the affectation of shewing it, she wore a hat of white satin with a narrow fringe of black bugles, and a waving plume of feathers. This splendid dress, on which the legacies of both her father and Anana were displayed, by some peculiar happiness, either in its make or mixture, became my Mary beyond any I had ever seen her wear. The fond mother's heart anticipated the impression she would infallibly make on her uncle, and drew from her heightened beauty the happiest presages.

Ah, who could have conjectured that this brilliance and parade were only destined to forerun one of the most dismal

moments of my life!—That an inhuman tyrant had delighted to employ the trembling hand of misfortune in decking a gaudy pageant, for herself eternally to mourn over!

At the appointed hour, a close carriage came for us with due attendants, and as the King had desired me not to bring any of my own, I rigidly obeyed, nor even hinted whither I was going. They drove us a long way, while engrossed by meditations on the approaching interview, as well as concerning the dear creature by me, I hardly knew how the time passed. My daughter at length observed that it was farther than she expected.—I looked out, but it was too dark for me to distinguish any object, and all I could discern was an increase of attendants. I called out aloud, and one drew near, who to my inquiries respectfully replied, that the King had been detained in London, whither they were hastening by his orders. This information quieted us again; and I strove to recal my fluttered spirits
into

into their usual channel, by turning the conversation on our future prospects. Nevertheless, we went at so great a rate, that I thought it impossible we should not be near London, when all at once I found we were driving through an unknown village. The surprise this occasioned was doubled by my daughter's throwing herself into my arms.—It was not immediately that I could comprehend her, when she told me that a light which gleamed from the window of a cottage, had shewn her a number of armed soldiers. From this alarm we were not yet recovered, when by a sudden rise, and hollow sound, we perceived we had passed over a draw-bridge; immediately after which we stopped. As we alighted, I cast my eyes round a large and dreary court-yard, where a few straggling centinels were planted, but neither lights, splendor, or attendants, indicated a royal guest, or a favorite's residence. The gloomy passages through which we were ushered,

seemed rather to lead to a prison than a palace.—Arrived at an empty apartment, I gave way at once to the dire, the obvious truth; and arraigning in silence my own egregious credulity, felt, severely felt, its every consequence.

An officer who had preceded us, now offered me a packet, which I received as the sentence of my fate, but made no effort to open it.—Hope, fear, curiosity, every dear and powerful emotion were annihilated by instantaneous conviction, and a stupor succeeded more dangerous and dreadful than the most violent operations of the passions.—My daughter, more terrified by this still agony than even the cruel and unexpected event of the evening, threw herself at my feet.—“Oh, speak to me, my mother!” exclaimed the dear one; “do not indulge the desperation your countenance expresses! do not consummate to your poor Mary the horrors of the moment!” I gazed at her with a vacant air, but nature resumed her rights, and fondly plucking at my heart, the tears I refused

fused to my own fate, flowed lavishly for hers.—So young, so fair, so innocent, so noble,—how could I but bewail her? Surely those maternal tears alone preserved my senses at a juncture when every thing conspired to unsettle them. My Mary, by an expressive glance, requested leave to open the packet, and, starting at sight of the paper it contained, put it eagerly into my hand; a glance informed me that it was the defamatory declaration the crafty Burleigh had deceived my sister into signing, while a prisoner in St. Vincent's abbey. The King, in sending this, only added insult to injury, since the testimonials I had delivered to him might have invalidated a thousand such vague and artificial falsehoods; yet had it a fortunate effect, for nothing less could have roused my spirits from the cold and sullen torpor which every passing moment seemed to increase—"Insolent Barbarian!" exclaimed I, "not content to imprison the unhappy offspring of the Queen who had the misfortune of giving thee being, dost thou delight in

vilifying and debasing even her ashes !—
Oh, paper ! dictated and preserved surely
for my ruin ; by what singular chance hast
thou survived the very views thou wert
invented to serve.—Treasured, as it ap-
pears, only to effect a purpose your execra-
ble contriver could not foresee.—Yet of
what consequence is this single attestation
towards annihilating claims all those I de-
livered had not power to establish in the
judgment of a cruel, insidious tyrant,
who voluntarily shut his heart alike to
reason, virtue, and nature ?—Devoted
to self-interest, vain of a petty talent at
deceiving, contemptible in every rank,
but infamous in the highest, he meanly
watched the generous impulses of my
heart, and wrought out of them my
ruin.—Yet why do I name *myself* ?—
Alas, of what importance is it to her
who no longer wishes to live where hea-
ven or its arbitrary delegate shall have ap-
pointed her to die ?—It is for thee, my
daughter ! for thee alone my soul thus
overflows with inexpressible anguish.—
Rescued, in yet unconscious childhood,
from

from slavery, neglect, and obscurity, fortune at one moment seemed willing to restore all the rights of your birth, when a weak, credulous mother assisted the cruel wretch who was pre-determined to entomb you, and annihilate every trace, every memorial, of our dear and honored progenitors.—Nameless—dishonored—your blooming youth must wither in an unknown prison—blighted by the tears of a parent who can never pardon herself the extravagant error produced by over-fondness.—I knew the King to be mean, base; subtle, yet I madly delivered into his treacherous hands every memorial on which our hopes, nay, even our vindication must be grounded.”——

“Hear me, in turn, my dear, my honored mother,” cried my sweet girl, “bathing my hands with tears of veneration and fondness. Alas, the order of nature is inverted, and I am obliged to become the monitor.—Recollect the maxim you have so deeply impressed upon my mind—that the malice of man would in vain strive to make us wretched, did not our
own

own ungovernable passions aid his artful machinations. Oh, let us respect even error when it has its source in virtue.—To have distrusted the King were to deserve to be rejected—leave him then to the contemptible satisfaction of having wrested from the widow and the orphan the last treasure of their lives, and let us examine what he has been compelled to leave us. Have we not yet the power of looking down on his throne, and all its specious advantages, even from that obscure prison where his authority confines us?—Have we not the pride of reviewing our own hearts without finding aught in either unworthy of our Creator or ourselves?—For the vain grandeur of that name of which he has unfairly deprived us, can it be worth regretting while he lives to dishonor it?—Fortunately no favorite view depended on its attainment, consequently no hope is blighted by the deprivation. Have I not often heard you say, a noble mind can become every thing to itself?—Let us rise superior to our fortune; time will

will

will soon calm our spirits—reason will reconcile us to the inconveniencies of our fate, and religion elevate us above them. —Mourn not then for me, my much-loved mother,” concluded the dear one, sweetly smiling through her tears, “since I shall never think that place a prison which contains you, nor that fate a misfortune I owe to your fondness.”

Oh, virtue, how awful dost thou appear, sublimed thus by generosity ! When I saw this half-blown human blossom support the storm without shrinking, I blushed to have bowed my head before it.—When I heard her with Spartan courage apply to her own situation the noble tenets I had fought, not vainly, to imbue her mind with, could I fail to profit by the principles I had taught ?—From the admiration she excited in my soul sprung that pure and elevated heroism which calms in one moment every human weakness, and turbulent passion ; disposing us to turn upon that fate it enables us to judge of.

I now

I now recollected that by a fond vanity in decking my daughter in all her valuable diamonds, I had inadvertently provided ample means to buy the fidelity of our keepers; nor were they aware of our treasure, as the severity of the weather had made me wrap her in a long cloak lined with fur. I hastily stripped her costly dress of its richest embellishments, and secreted them. Ah, with what difficulty did I stifle the tears and anguish which struggled at my heart when I remembered the different views with which I adorned her!

Hardly had we executed this prudent resolve, ere the man I have mentioned presented himself once more; he was young—not unpleasing—had an air of integrity and profound respect, that a little prepossessed me in his favor, even under all the disadvantages attending our meeting. Our countenances were now calmed, and our resolutions taken.—He appeared surprised alike with this transition, and the beauty of my daughter; whose

whose magnificent but disordered dress had a share of his attention.—He was flattered with our civility, and assured us “that every accommodation consistent with the strict orders of the King he should take pleasure in supplying us with; and would, with our permission, make us acquainted with our new home.” He then produced some keys which opened double doors at the farther end of the large room we were in, and conducted us into a chamber neat and commodious enough.—The keys, he informed us, were committed solely to his charge; and that whenever inclination or convenience induced us to change our apartment, we had only to touch a spring he pointed out, when he would attend, and unlock the intermediate doors.—The purport of this extreme caution was very obvious; it excluded every possibility of winning over a female servant, as all the domestic offices would now of course be performed in either room while we occupied the other; nor was he suffered to supply

supply us pen, ink, or paper. As the conveniencies of these apartments, and the air of respect in our guard, shewed some attention had been paid to our welfare, as well as the most judicious precautions taken to prevent our enlargement, I neither imputed the one or the other to the King, but rather both to his cunning favorite. My inquiries were interrupted by the entrance of two servants, who set out an elegant supper, of which neither my daughter or myself had spirits to partake. Resolved however to gather all I could from my attendant, ere another should be put in his place, or suspicion make him dumb, I asked the name of the Castle, and its owner; but to these questions he declared himself enjoined to refuse replying; nevertheless, I conjectured from his looks that I did not err in supposing Somerset directed him. The refined artifice of offering to introduce me to the King, and even remaining by my side, while perhaps my ruin was effecting by his will,

2

seemed

seemed entirely consistent with the character Prince Henry had given me of that worthless favorite; though I could find no crime in my own conduct that could possibly irritate him to bury us thus alive, unless indeed our attachment to that lamented royal youth appeared a sufficient one.

In the gallery leading to our apartment, I observed a centinel planted, from whom we were shut by double doors safely locked; perceiving we were thus effectually excluded from every hope, and chance of freedom, I desired to pass at once into a chamber, where I did not flatter myself I should find rest.

My first employment on rising was to examine the windows, as well as the view from them; they were so closely grated as to convince me that however comfortable our residence, it was still a prison. The apartments we occupied formed one side of a quadrangle of old buildings, most probably barracks, but now entirely deserted. On making the signal,
Dunlop

Dunlop (for so was our guard called) readily attended, and we passed into the other room where we found breakfast ready. Trunks containing all kinds of apparel had been placed there, and Dunlop recommended to us to form our minds to passing the remainder of our days in confinement. I did not submit to hear this, without demanding the authority by which he acted. He produced an order, signed by the King, strictly enjoining him to keep us in safety, and beware we neither wrote or received a letter, or indeed held any kind of communication with the world.—While he spoke I examined every lineament of his countenance, but fidelity was written there in such legible characters, that I dared not make any effort to bribe him, lest if it failed he should publish that I had the means, which might in a moment utterly impoverish me.

A few wearisome uniform days only had elapsed when every hope decayed, and my spirits flagged at once.—Alas,
my

my mind had no longer the vivifying ardor, the inexhaustible resources of unbroken youth——its bloom had passed away like a shadow, and all its fire evaporated.—The woful realities of life had dissipated the bright illusions of imagination.—Every human good was, in my estimation, shrunk into so small a compass, that freedom constituted a very essential part of my little possessions.—I was no longer able to rely upon contingencies, and sunk at once under all the sadness of knowledge.—Not denied the relief of books, I pored over them in vain; every idea was still pursuing an absent good, and my senses would reject the sublimest author, to follow the careless steps of a weary centinél, or listen to his whistling. Whether my daughter had really more resolution than myself, or only assumed the appearance of it to save me from despair, was a point I could not ascertain; but the complacency of her mind and manners was invariable. By a thousand little affectionate artifices she engaged me to work while she read, or

read while she worked, nor would perceive those melancholy reveries it was impossible to overlook. I was not, however, thankless for the blessing left me. That my eyes opened on her every morning, still made me bless it ; and in composing myself to sleep, I nightly praised the God who yet suffered her to rest by me.

Two tedious months elapsed in undecisive projects.—Dunlop ever present, vigilant, and respectful, precluded alike complaint and temptation ; but as if to guard himself against the latter, I took notice that he now never remained one moment alone with us.

The impossibility of forming any judgment of our centinels while divided from them by double doors, and the danger of a fruitless effort to seduce one, had at intervals engrossed my attention ; but the mind cannot dwell for ever on a single idea, or a remote and uncertain project. Wearied out with this, another suddenly came to my relief. Though yet early in the spring, the weather was uncommonly

monly beautiful, and the lenity with which we were treated left me not without hopes of being allowed, under rigid limitations, the liberty of walking in whatever gardens the castle-walls enclosed. By this means I could examine the countenances of our centinels, and if I saw one in whom humanity was not quite extinct, I thought I might find some means to shew him a jewel; thus proving I could largely recompense him, should he have the courage to assist us. Nor did my lameness wholly deprive me of the power of walking, though it prevented my enjoying the liberty.—After considering this plan in every possible light, I saw nothing to forbid the attempt, and ventured the request.—A few anxious days elapsed ere I had the satisfaction of finding it was granted, on as good terms as I could hope. Dunlop acquainted me, we must walk separately, that the person confined might be a check upon her that was liberated; who should not remain in the garden more than an

hour, nor quit his sight one moment. These restrictions were as moderate as I could expect, and I eagerly prepared to profit by the granted permission, ere I ventured my daughter : certain I should at least discover the strength, height, and situation of the Castle.—Dunlop, followed by two other men, attended upon me. I cast an eager eye on the centinel I passed in the gallery, but saw no trace of sense, feeling, or curiosity in his. The little garden was in so antique a style, and ruinous a condition, as plainly proved that this dismantled building was now only a prison, whatever its former distinction. The wall around it appeared decayed, and not very high—it looked down on a moat, apparently dry.—From one part of the terrace I caught the corner of a tower I fancied belonged to Windsor Castle, but dared not venture a word which might imply design, and returned without asking a single question. My daughter now took her turn ; and, as we continued to claim
this

this relief whenever the weather favored, I fancied it improved her health as well as my own.

It chanced at length, I one day found a centinel on guard whose eye expressed both pity and curiosity.—Mine addressed itself to him in a most pointed manner. Without altering the position of my hand (in which I always carried a diamond for that purpose) I opened it, and the foldier, as I wished, surveyed the jewel.—I turned my head at the instant Dunlop was unlocking the door, and the centinel shook his emphatically. Yet only to have been understood revived at once my spirits, and my hopes ; for to escape did not appear so impracticable to me, as to gain an assistant. I saw him no more for a week, but soon found that day was the periodical one for his attendance.—Involved in a thousand plots, the want of pen and ink seemed to condemn them all to inhabit only my brain, when at once I discovered a substitute for those useful articles. From the middle

of a large book, which we had unmolested possession of, I took some of the printed leaves, and from the conclusion a blank one ; out of the first I cut such words as simply conveyed my meaning, and sewed them on the last.—“ Assist us to escape, and we will make your fortune,” was the substance of this singular but important billet. To ascertain my ability to realize this promise, I wrapt in it a diamond of some value, and carried both ever in my hand, still hoping fortune would enable me for one moment to mislead the attention of my guards ; but, alas, Dunlop far from relaxing his vigilance, continually increased it. The two men who followed him in the garden now attended to my door ; remaining as spies on me while Dunlop opened it. Thus circumstanced, I could not make the slightest overture without being liable to detection, and I dreaded awakening the most distant doubt, lest it should condemn us to a more rigorous confinement.—One favorable omen alone

occurred.—The soldier I had selected clearly understood me. I saw his eye ever anxiously fixed on my hand, as if eager to transfer its contents to his own; nor had I ceased to flatter myself I should yet do so, when an unforeseen incident at once annihilated every hope and project, and plunged me in the deepest sorrow.

I had always counted the moments of my daughter's absence, and nothing but the conviction that air and exercise were necessary towards her health, could have enabled me to support it. What then became of me when one day I found her walk unusually lengthened!—I endeavoured to persuade myself that my fears foreran the danger.—But more than twice the usual time had certainly elapsed; nor dared I venture an inquiry, lest I should suggest a hint to my persecutors which hitherto had escaped them. The hours thus passed on, but Mary returned not—Ah me! While my weak hand repeats this, I almost expire

under the recollection.—Every evil my untoward fate had yet teemed with became peace, nay pleasure, on a comparison with this.—Though the turbulence of each succeeding storm had swept away invaluable treasures, something yet remained my weary soul might cling to.—This single gem, this solitary relique of all my fortunes, more dear, more precious from becoming so, a dreadful deceitful calm had at length swallowed up even while I was fearless of the danger.—Heart-struck—incapable at once either of distinguishing, or complaining, my respiration became perturbed, and deep.—A still agony, more dreadful than the wildest tumults of the passions, numbed my very soul ; every hair seemed to start from, and pierce my too-sensible brain ; while drops, cold as those of death, chased one another down my scarcely throbbing temples.—When Dunlop presented himself, I rose not from the earth, I uttered not a syllable ; but lifting an eye to him which would have melted a savage, he turned

turned away, unable to support the shock, and offered me some order from the King, bewailing at the same moment the painful duty imposed on him. This roused my torpid spirits—I tore it indignantly into a thousand atoms; resentiment restored my speech.—I called for my Mary in the most piercing accents—nothing could suspend, or mitigate my anguish. I bitterly reproached Dunlop with tearing the beauteous innocent from her mother's bosom, only to deliver her up to assassins—In vain he declared himself incapable of such villainy, and acting under the orders of the King—In vain he assured me that she was only removed to another apartment, safe, and unhurt. My soul rejected all his assertions.—Mary—Mary—Mary!—was all my convulsed lips could utter, or my disconsolate soul dictate.

Ah, God! the solitude that succeeded! Food, light, air, nay even life itself, became nauseous and insupportable.—Stretched on the cold ground—drenched in my own tears, I gave way to the
deep

deep misery, the tremendous void, this barbarous separation could not but plunge me in.—How long was it since she had been the very essence of my existence ! From the sorrowful moment which gave her into my arms, to that which tore her from them, she, she alone, had occupied my every sense, and enabled me to support every affliction.—Never, though I had led her myself, through an admiring nation to the altar, and joined her hand with that of the incomparable Henry, never could even that advantage have compensated to my yearning heart for the loss of her society. What then must it suffer to recollect that a savage had wrested her, for unknown purposes, from my arms ! Nor could I, amidst all the horrors this idea teemed with, fix on any distinct one.

Oh, that melodious voice ! Still it seemed to vibrate on my ear, but no longer could I hear it.—That unmatched form glistered through every tear, but evaporated with it. The most deadly glooms came over me—a thousand times

I raised

I raised my rash hand to precipitate—the unfortunate Rose Cecil alone withheld me.—I often thought I heard her aerial voice, and despair slowly subsided into resignation.

I now exerted every effort to gain upon Dunlop; but, too faithful to his execrable employers, I never won more from him than that my daughter was still in the Castle, not only unhurt, but treated with distinction and indulgence.—Yet, how could I credit such improbable assurances! or even if they were true, ought not an indulgence so partial to alarm more strongly a mother's feelings? To every solicitation once more to behold her, I received a positive denial; nor was even the liberty of walking now allowed me. I often inquired why I was thus restrained, if no injury was meditated to my unfortunate child? To questions of this kind he never answered, but left me to my own fluctuating conjectures: They were so numerous and frightful, that conviction could hardly aggravate the evil. Nevertheless, as Dunlop seemed

ever anxious to compose my mind by reiterated assurances of my poor girl's safety, and as there was an air of candour in all he uttered, I began at length to conclude that the contemptible Somerset had aspired to the niece of his master; but from being already married to the divorced Countess of Essex, had not dared to avow his passion. I recollected too late the singularity of his being with Prince Henry when first we beheld that amiable youth;—the assiduous respect he had shewn in waiting on me at Richmond;—the affected offer of his interest with a tyrant whose will he so well knew how to make subservient to his own;—the combination of refined arts by which we had been led to throw ourselves into the prison selected for us;—and, finally, that the prison was probably a house of his own.—Through the whole of this, as well as the manner in which we were guarded, there was a policy too minute for a King to plan, and too watchful to be the work of an indifferent person.—When by a just turn of thought we insensibly un-

unravel any hitherto inexplicable event, how does the mind disdain its former blindness ! I now considered with wonder my long want of perspicacity, and found something every moment to corroborate and strengthen the idea I had adopted.

To fix on any thing certain appears to the exhausted soul a degree of relief ; and though, at some moments, I dreaded art and violence might be employed, if gentle methods failed to undermine the virtue of my sweet girl, yet I much oftener flattered myself that she could not inspire a passion so gross and unworthy ; and knew her soul superior to every other seduction. From the instant I ventured once more to hope, all my plans for escaping revived ; I had no longer, it is true, the privilege of passing beyond my apartment, but misery is ever ingenious, and I was pre-informed of the days when the compassionate centinel guarded the door ; nay, I fancied I often heard him draw near, attracted by my sighs and groans.—The note I had formerly prepared was
yet

yet in being; I sewed it to a long thin slip of whalebone, and, on the day when he used to be attending, worked it gently under both doors, at a time when I judged no other person near, and softly rapped at the inner one. A sweet hope rekindled in my heart as I felt it drawn out of my hand. I watched in vain the whole tedious day for a reply, and often fancied my effort had been betrayed to Dunlop; but as I did not perceive any alteration in his countenance, I became reassured; and concluded that the soldier could not write, nor perhaps even read, and if so, a whole week must necessarily elapse ere I could learn his resolutions. The expiration of that time verified my last conjecture. With unspeakable satisfaction I at last saw a billet introduced into my solitude, by the same means I had successfully ventured. I was a long time decyphering the almost unintelligible scrawl: “ I pity you, lady, from my heart, but I know not how to help you; it is true, you are rich and I am very poor, but then it is impossible to get at you; if
you

you can think of any way, I am ready to assist." Ah, God! how did I lift up my eyes to thee, who hadst thus strangely opened once more to me a communication with that society from which I had been so unfairly wrested! In moments like this every thing appears possible; already I seemed to see my prison gates open, my daughter in my arms, and our honest assistant rich at once in our wealth and our blessings. Having had the foresight to prepare another billet, I conveyed it in the same manner. "Worthy soldier, is my daughter safe, and yet in this Castle? if so, tear away all but the word, yes, and my soul shall for ever bless you." How pure was the joy with which I received the precious monosyllable!

To prepare another billet, comprehending my plan, was a work of time; with what perturbation did I undertake it! To condense my meaning in a few words, and yet leave it obvious to a common capacity, was not an easy task.—I thus
at

at last effected it : “ Generous friend, win over him who guards my daughter’s door, while you are at mine, and I will share with both of you the rich jewels I possess, of which you saw only the smallest. Observe the form of the keys Dunlop brings—buy many as near them as possible, and so various that some may certainly fit.—Procure likewise two regimental suits, that we may pass the centinels unquestioned ; if you can raise the little money necessary for this, fear not to spend it ; I will make your fortune in the moment our doors are opened.—Restore me to my daughter—conduct us to the gate, and we will both beseech the Almighty to bless the riches we will joyfully leave in your hands.”

Having dispatched this, I waited the deciding hour with the most anxious impatience ; and scarce dared to raise my eyes from the ground, lest Dunlop should read in them aught that might alarm his suspicions.

How

How to dispose of myself, and daughter, when out of the Castle; was a question I could not decide upon; but I flattered myself that as we should have some hours the start of our persecutors, we might reach London; where it would not be easy to apprehend persons who had been imprisoned without any judicial inquiry or sentence.—A greater fear however than that occurred.—How if these soldiers should not be honest—the reward we must bestow would prove what we possessed, and our lives might be the forfeit. Yet such was my desperate state, that even this reasonable apprehension did not induce me one moment to hesitate.

The appointed time revolved, and I received another billet. “Be ready when all is quiet—every thing is prepared if any of the keys fit.—My comrade and self must go with you to secure our own safety, but it will likewise secure yours.” Oh, how did my heart bound at this happy intelligence!—my languor, my lameness, all was forgotten. Maternal love, and ha-

bitual fear, seemed to wing me with supernatural powers.

As the important moment approached, I knelt and devoutly invoked the assistance of heaven. Ah! not in vain; for the first effort of the soldiers was successful. I reached out a rich and ready hand to each.—They received the contents with extreme satisfaction, and, conjuring me to preserve the most profound silence, locked the doors, and led me to the further side of the Castle. At the threshold of my daughter's apartment they gave into my hand the disguises I had desired, and agreed to wait till we were ready. The tender meltings mothers only know thrilled through my heart, and sweetened every apprehension, as I gently made my way from a dark room towards one where I saw lights still burning: but fearful of alarming my sweet girl, I hesitated at the door. What was my astonishment to perceive that the apartment was gay, magnificent, and illuminated!—I thought at first that anxiety had bewildered my faculties,
but

but their truth became evident when they centered at once on my daughter ; who, elegantly habited, had sunk on a couch asleep. A writing table covered with due implements stood before her, on which lay a letter it appeared to me she had been answering. The deadly coldness, the nameless sensations this extraordinary scene could not but occasion, at once suspended even the most powerful emotions of nature. A repulsion so terrible obliged me to rest my head against the pillar of the door, and struggle some time with the sickness and confusion of my soul, ere I could gather strength to penetrate into the fact. She still continued to enjoy a repose, it seemed to me that I never should know again, and I had now lost the wish of awakening her ; of escaping—alas, even of existing ! Slowly at length I tottered toward the table, and catching at the two letters I mentioned, appeared to grasp in them my very fate. The signature of the first made its contents almost needless.

“ A few days, a very few days more, most charming of women, and I shall be able to indulge your every wish—every thing is now in train—pain me not therefore in thus pressing an impossibility. The heart of your mother is inexorable to me—it has ever been so, and I neither dare trust her with the truth, or you with one so prejudiced, till the law shall have annulled my detested marriage, and the King agree to my union with yourself—I live but in that hope ; it supports me under all these long and tedious absences. Why will you call the safe home in which you are enclosed, a prison?—The whole world appears so to him who beholds with pleasure only that spot where you dwell. To-morrow I shall steal an hour to pass with you—smile for that hour, my beloved, and bless with a welcome your devoted Somerset.”

Of what various, what manifold miseries is the human heart susceptible ! None of all the exquisite variety I had hitherto known, ever surpassed this new one.

one. My disdainful soul recoiled from even the dear object of its affections—hypocrisy, that essence of all vices, had stolen into her heart under the name of love, and blighted the virtues yet blossoming—fearfully I perused her letter, to end every doubt.

“ What ages of solitude, of suffering does
 “ your love, my lord, impose on me ! In
 “ vain you would fill up that place in my
 “ heart, a parent so justly revered must
 “ ever hold. But you still talk of to-mor-
 “ row, and to-morrow—alas, it is a day
 “ that may perhaps never come—you think
 “ me vapourish, but you know not how
 “ strangely my illness increases—it is acute
 “ and violent—Oh that I could lay my
 “ burning head one moment on my mo-
 “ ther’s bosom !—Catharine gave me some
 “ whey yesterday ; I don’t know,—perhaps
 “ I wrong her, but I have not been myself
 “ since. A thousand gloomy images have
 “ taken possession of my mind ! my eager
 “ ear is filled with imaginary knells : I
 “ could fancy myself dying : you will
 Y 3 “ laugh

“ laugh perhaps at this weakness, but I
“ cannot conquer it—if I should indeed
“ judge right, release my mother I conjure
“ you, and conceal for ever from her——”

Ah, what? exclaimed I in the most terrible agony, for at this unfinished sentence the letter broke off.—Disdain, suspense, anguish, contended within me, and shook my frame like the last struggle of nature.—Of all the horrors that bewildered my mind, one, one alone, could my senses ascertain.—My hapless girl was indeed dying—wan and hollow were those cheeks late so florid—the icy fingers of death were impressed upon her temples, and the eyes she heavily opened, as her woe-struck mother dropt upon earth, had no longer either life, beauty, or lustre—Oh, that my soul had escaped in the groan which followed this horrible conviction!—She faintly shrieked, and remained in a kind of stupor; tenderness, however, soon predominated in my mind over every other sensation.—I threw my arms round her in silence, and the tears which deluged her cheeks, alone declared what passed

passed in my soul.—Still she uttered not a word, but griped my hands as though the pangs of death were indeed upon her. I in vain conjured, intreated her to speak; it was long ere she had courage to enter into a detail which she had neither breath or voice to go through. “Condemn me not wholly, my mother,” at length cried the dear one, “however appearances may incense you. I ask for only life enough to acquit myself, and will to my last moment thank the God who restores me to your arms, though only to blush away my being in them. Yet have I no other crime to avow than that reserve unconquerably interwoven in my nature.—Alas, yesterday I thought it a virtue.—Heaven will, perhaps, give me strength to go through the story, at least, I ought to make the effort.—Oh, deign to pardon my compelled abruptness, and hear me with patience !

“At the moment which first presented Prince Henry to our knowledge, he was accompanied by the Earl of Somerset.—How my eyes conceived the partiality my

reason could never erase I know not, but they decided at once in his favor.—Whether the Earl perceived the involuntary distinction, or was led by an equal one on his own part, is alike unknown to me; but I understood the reluctance he felt when obliged to give way to the Prince, whom he left with us—the contempt with which you afterwards mentioned Lord Somerset strangely shocked and alarmed me; yet (may I own it) I secretly accused the most upright heart existing of pride and prejudice; and found a thousand reasons for suddenly disputing a judgment which had hitherto been the rule of my own.—During the frequent visits of Prince Henry, when prudence induced you to send me abroad; alas, to what a temptation did you unconsciously expose me! Somerset availed himself of those opportunities, and, by distant homage, confirmed the prepossession I had already conceived.—What shame, what sorrow, what humiliation, has it cost me!—Can you ever know a more exquisite misery than to bestow your heart unworthily?

to

to be humbled without guilt——compelled to blush hourly for errors not your own—and reduced to a perpetual conflict with those powerful and natural emotions which form, under more fortunate circumstances, the felicity of youth ! Sensible by the curious attention of others, how injurious that of the Earl might in time become, I requested leave to remain at home ; and awed, in spite of myself, by your sentiments, boldly resolved to sacrifice the erroneous inclination of my heart, and received the vows of Prince Henry. To see you happy, to flatter him with the hope of being so, for a time elevated and amused my mind ; but solitude soon restored it to its favorite object : Somerset still presented himself, and I took pleasure in the tears in which I drowned his admired image. By some means or other I found letters from him frequently in my chamber.—I dared not inquire how, lest I should awaken your suspicions ; alas, perhaps that was one of the fine-spun webs with which love ever

ever veils its errors ! I found him regularly informed of all our designs ;—I knew it was in his power to cross them by a word ; and I began to esteem him for daring to be silent. During the last progress of the King, Somerset resolved to profit by the absence of Henry, and, apprized of the interviews we granted the Prince in the pavilion in the garden, as well as of my habit of sitting there, he determined to take the chance of pleading his cause. My stay was by the rising of the moon unusually prolonged on the evening he had selected to present himself before me. The pale light served only to shadow out his form—any human one must at such a moment have appalled me.—I shrieked, and was half-fainting when the sound of his voice dissipated my terror. Surprise, perhaps joy, that instantaneous confidence we ever repose in the object beloved, doubtless reassured him. I was scarce conscious I had granted the audience he demanded, till he fell at my feet to thank me. The manner in which

he avowed his passion, made me sensible too late that I had ill-disguised my own; I know not whether I should have had resolution to attempt doing so much longer, had not our conversation been suddenly interrupted by Henry. The Prince to my inexpressible dismay, entered the pavilion.—My voice had drawn him thither, but the sound of Somerset's made him retreat in contemptuous silence. The Earl would have followed, but I caught his arm and obstinately withheld him:—then conjuring him to hasten to his boat, I flew after the Prince. Henry had thrown himself on the seat near the terrace; but, sensible of the necessity of separating him and the Earl at such a crisis, I entreated the Prince to protect me to the house. The light of the moon enabled me to judge from his bewildered air of the distraction of his mind. I had not courage to break a silence he voluntarily maintained: yet to part under appearances so equivocal was impossible. I hesitated at length a faint explanation.

nation. “ Could you contradict the evidence of my senses, madam,” sighed the Prince, in a low and tender tone, “ I might wish to hear you: as it is, spare me, I conjure you, on a subject so hateful; I have nothing to reproach you with but a reserve which led me to deceive myself.—Adieu, I promise you inviolable silence.—He who once hoped to constitute your felicity, disdains to interfere with it. Yet one truth I ought perhaps to apprize you of: your happy, your favored lover is married; think not I wish to reap any advantage from this information—never more shall I breathe a vow at your feet—Oh, Mary! you have undone me!” He wrung my hands in an agony of passion, and rushed through the garden to conceal the sobs which continued to pierce my heart through my ear. What a night did I pass!—sad prelude to so many miserable ones. I readily absented myself the next day at the Prince’s usual hour of visiting us. I never saw him afterwards without pain, humiliation, and

and constraint; though he omitted nothing likely to reconcile me to myself. During the fatal illness into which he fell, how continually did my heart reproach me with increasing, if not causing it! and how deeply was my injustice to his merit punished, in the mortifying conviction that Somerset had dared to deceive me!—What prayers did I offer up for Henry's recovery——What vows to atone for my error, by a life devoted to him! Alas, I was not worthy a lover so noble; and heaven recalled his purer essence, while yet un sullied. The sense of a hopeless and unworthy passion mingled with the deep grief I could not but feel for his loss. A sickliness and disgust succeeded—rank, royalty, distinction, every worldly advantage combined, could not have dissipated the gloom of my mind, or reconciled me for a moment to society. I took no pleasure in the hopes, you, my dear, my generous mother, cherished for me; but I would not be ungrateful, and therefore concealed my

my apathy. Thus impressed, what merit was there in that effort which enabled me to become your comforter under a reverse I scarcely felt?—Oh, that my errors, my misfortunes, had ended here—that I had breathed my last on your revered bosom, while yet unconscious of wounding it! When the vain hope of freedom made you solicit for a limited portion of air and exercise, how could you foresee the fatal consequences of that periodical indulgence! In the first of these solitary walks, Somerset presented himself before me; not the crested, aspiring favorite; but the self-accusing, the pale, the humble lover.—My eyes however resisted the impulse of my heart, and turned haughtily from him; but he hung on my robe, he intreated, he conjured,—he *would* be heard.—I feel I shall not have time to enter into the long explanation of his conduct which won from me an unwilling pardon: suffice it to say, that he knew every the most secret transaction in our house, nor ventured to marry till convinced I was be-

be-

betrothed to Prince Henry. But, oh ! the wretch he espoused !——Never may you know the crimes of which she has too probably been guilty ! It was to Somerset's interposition we owed the prolongation of those lives, the pride and rage of the King had secretly devoted from the moment he read the papers he took a malicious pleasure in destroying.—Still anxious for me, the Earl owned he had persuaded James to imprison us in this Castle, as well to secure our safety, as to provide us those comforts and conveniencies our royal relation would have deprived us of.

“I could not be insensible to services like these ; and, finding my wrath began to abate, he awakened my pity, by describing the domestic miseries an unhappy marriage had imposed on him. The tears with which my wounded soul blotted this picture, induced him still farther to explain himself. His hopes of a divorce seemed rationally grounded, and I could not but enter into his views
on

on that head.—I was not however able to persuade him that you would ever think as I did, and weakly promised a secrecy I ought to have seen the danger of——Yet, the prejudice which induced you to impute even our imprisonment to him, seemed so fixed, so unalterable, that though a thousand times the integrity of my nature tempted me to unfold to you the only secret my bosom ever teemed with, I shrunk before a mind so disgusted, nor dared to utter one syllable might pain you. The delays of Somerset, however necessary, alarmed and distressed me—I became cold and melancholy; and, too delicate to confide to him the true causes of this alteration, he soon assigned a false one: Peevishness and altercation now robbed our interviews of all their sweetness.—He often reproached me with having opened my heart to you, who alone could thus shut it against him.—Disdain urged me one day to assure him I would do so, the first moment I again beheld you.—He left me in a transport of rage. Alas, my heart
became

became sensible of one every way equal to it, when I found that I was not permitted to return to your prison: I refused to admit him to that allotted for me, and gave vent to every extravagance so unforeseen an injury must excite.—His answer convinced me that this step had long been meditated. He assured me that “he would sooner die than restore me to a mother who had ever hated, detested, and despised him without any reason, till his claim took place of hers, and he could call me his wife.” The cruel remembrance of what you must suffer, soon reduced me to intreaties, and solemn promises of continued secrecy. “They were now,” he replied, “too late;—that he could not suppose it possible I should be able to conceal from you the cause of my absence; and this, justly strengthening the unreasonable disgust and hatred you already felt towards him, would make you go any lengths to prevent a union you must naturally abhor.”——To this he added all he thought likely to soothe my

embittered spirit, and solemnly assured me your mind was relieved, by a conviction that this separation was only in consequence of a new order from court.—

Although I saw in this mode of conduct a chicanery and little art my nature disdained, I was yet glad to imagine it lightened to you the heavy affliction our separation could not but cause. I felt too late the error of mental reservation, and had sufficient reason to think every evil might branch out from that little root. Having in vain contended with the man no less master of my life than fate, I at length was wearied into forgiving him. The divorce was now in great forwardness, and the manifold iniquities of the fiend in human shape he had married such as could not but shock and interest a heart disposed to love him. A thousand busy projects passed daily from his brain to mine, and often intervened between myself and a mother so revered. Every hour that went over my head made it more impossible for me to appear before
you

you but as his wife, and I became as eager as himself for a day which heaven had pre-ordained I should never see. One who pursued her point more effectually, has severely punished all my youthful errors—Oh may my premature death be received, by him who made me, as an expiation!—How shall I tell you!—and yet I must—I have often thought my food tainted with poison—yesterday—Alas, my mother, where is now your fortitude?—where is that sublime resignation I have seen you exert?—forget the vain hopes you once formed for me—forget that I am your daughter; oh! think the erring wretch this awful moment recalls was born to embitter the days that yet remain to you, and adore, even in this painful moment, the mercy of the Almighty!—If I have not sinned beyond forgiveness, graciously extend yours to me, while yet I am sensible of the blessing.”

As she threw herself into my arms, every feature seemed shrunk, and moulded by the fingers of death—Alas! what became

of me at this crisis ! her paroxysms were scarce more dreadful than those that seized upon my soul—every emotion of love, friendship, and kindred, appeared tranquillity, when compared with the wild, uncontrolable anguish of the robbed, the ruined mother. Perpetually ready to give vent to the tumultuous execrations my heart pronounced against the artful, insidious traitor, who had alienated her affections, and warped the rectitude of her mind, an intuitive conviction that such a transport would vainly embitter the little time remaining to her, obliged me to confine to sighs and groans all the miseries of the moment. I drew her fondly to my bosom, and poured over her pale convulsed cheeks a heart-broken mother's solemn absolution.

One horror only could be added to a scene like this, nor was it wanting. The centinels, weary of waiting and startled by our groans, now abruptly entered the chamber.—Scared at the sight of my daughter expiring in my arms, the sense
of

of their own danger soon over-ruled every other; they urged, they conjured me to leave my Mary, now apparently lifeless; but they urged, they conjured in vain.—On her I was soon to resign to her Creator my whole soul was now fixed.—The dear one faintly revived; but, struck with inconceivable horror at sight of the soldiers, she relapsed into convulsions, griping me still closer. Ah, God, the cold chill that followed! when I found her hold relax at once—the world vanished from before my eyes—they beheld only the fair form, which sought a grave on the bosom where it first found a being.—Inspired with the fierceness of a savage, I grasped her yet closer, shrieking tremendously, and with a strength surely supernatural. The confused and incensed soldiers, having used every persuasion in vain, made the most violent efforts to sever me from the last, the dearest, the only object of my love. Threats, intreaties, art, and force, however, were alike vain——nothing could

win, could tear her from me. They presented at length their bayonets to my bosom, and beheld me with surprise dare the blow.—Perhaps they had really pierced it, but that some women, attendant on my daughter, now rushed into the room. Fear for their own safety obliged the soldiers to forbear urging or enforcing me further. They seized the intruders, lest any of them should escape, and, having bound them, sought safety in flight. A terrible calm succeeded my intense desperation——the blood which had tumultuously burnt along every vein now returned in torrents, to choke up, and drown my heart.——The black fumes mounted thence to my brain.—With a grief-glazed eye, I contemplated the pale and precious cheek from whose rich coloring I of late drew life, till ignorant that I either suffered, or existed.

* * * * *

Seldom

Seldom enough myself to distinguish the shadowy forms that flitted round my bed, and always too indifferent to utter a single question, I opened not the curtain, nor cared who was beyond it.—Vague and stifled exclamations alone informed me of the danger of that fatal fire which raged within my veins:—Danger did I say?—I ought rather to have called it relief. During the short intervals of my delirium, I voluntarily sunk in silence under the gloom and debility it left. Suddenly I was seized with such flutters, and gaspings, as seemed to indicate an immediate termination of every human infliction—My weary soul hovered at the gate of its prison, and I felt as if a single word would release it; but I had neither ability or inclination to pronounce that word; and though I perceived that every curtain was undrawn to give me air, I raised not my quivering eyelids to distinguish the two persons who anxiously held each hand, as watching for

the last beat of the faint and hurried pulse.

While thus in the very struggle and fluctuation incident to parting nature, a voice suddenly reached my receding senses—a voice so mellow, calm, and holy, that life yet lingered on it. I distinguished these words: “Oh, Almighty God! with whom do live the spirits of the just made perfect, when they are delivered from their earthly prisons; we humbly commend the soul of this thy servant, our dear sister, into thy hands, as into those of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour!” A faint effort I made to release my hands, with the design of raising them towards heaven, caused the prayer to cease. An emotion I could not resist made me lift my dim eyes to behold, if not absolutely an angel, the human being that most resembled one. At a table near my bed knelt a Clergyman, whose reverend locks time had entirely bleached, but it had taken nothing from his fine eyes, which seemed
to

to reflect the divinity he served—care and experience had worn traces in every perfect feature; and the pale purity of virtue, chastened alike by sorrow and resignation, had succeeded to the vivid hues of youth, hope, and health. I uttered a sigh, and faint exclamation.—A sweet, yet sad, pleasure wandered through my exhausted frame, thus to be assured that I had reached the very point of my being. Some women decently arrayed in black having assisted my infirm and venerable comforter to rise, conducted him to the side of my bed, and retired. With a graciousness peculiar to himself, he adjured me, since the mercy of the Almighty had unexpectedly restored my intellects, to profit by the indulgence in preparing my soul to appear before him. An impulse of gratitude induced me to raise my hand to take his, that sympathetically trembled over me; but even this trifling motion made me sensible that I had on many blisters, which wrung my feeble sense even to fainting.

The

The women, as is usual in desperate cases, gave me some vivifying cordials, and again retired. The reverend stranger once more addressed me, praising the Almighty for the restoration of my intellects—they were indeed restored, for oh! the recollection of that dismal event which had rendered their loss a blessing returned upon my mind, and made me loathe the succours I could owe only to the detested hand that had consummated my woes! “Oh, you,” cried I, in a broken voice, “who thus seek to comfort the miserable, inform me first to whom I owe the benefit?” He paused a moment—his gracious eyes glanced upward, and, having thus consulted with his Creator, he answered me with firmness; “that he was called De Vere; the household Chaplain of the Earl of Somerset.”—At that abhorred title I shut my eyes as though I could have shut out retrospection, and waved to him to leave me.—“Rash, unfortunate woman,” returned he, in a solemn and yet tender tone, “religion
does

does not permit me to obey you—would you bear into a better world the pride, the passions, the prejudices, which have certainly embittered, perhaps shortened, your days in this?—Dare you present to the pure source of good, your great, your glorious Creator, a soul yet sullied with voluntary frailties and human imperfection?—Are you not on the point of ceasing to suffer, wherefore then should you not cease to resent? Religion enjoins you to forget the faults of others, and contemplate only your own.—Attend to truth, and I will impart it to you—resolve to be patient, and I will pour balm into the deep wounds of human calamity—control your passions, and I will elevate them, even under the struggles of parting nature, by hopes which shall surely be realized, because they centre in immortality.”—The Author of universal being seemed to speak to me through his Minister—the gathering tumult stood suspended. “You address not an ingrate,” returned I feebly, “I have walked in peace through

through life with my God, and fain would I die so : though surely to remember the wretch, who precipitates me into eternity by a grief too pungent for endurance, with charity, or composure, exceeds my ability. If you have aught to reveal that may allay this irritation, be truly generous in unfolding it—if otherwise, present such images only to my mind as may drive from it that of a villain, whose offences you cannot extenuate ; nor double the agonies even you cannot relieve.”

“ It is my only intention, madam,” replied he.—“ Alas, I would not probe your wounds even to heal them !—If it is necessary to suffer ere we can feel, believe me, I want not even that power of sympathizing with you ; yet must I reconcile my divine and human character, by vindicating the innocent while I soothe the unfortunate ; though even the wealth of nations could not tempt me for one moment to palliate guilt. Have you courage to hear a letter, given me by my Lord, in hopes of the present opportunity ? I controlled

controlled myself, and signed to him to read.

“ In what words, most injured, most
“ unfortunate of women, shall the wretch
“ who has unconsciously destroyed your
“ peace and his own, deprecate the wrath
“ his very idea must occasion?—Alas,
“ overwhelmed with grief, horror, despair,
“ every killing sensation, (guilt alone ex-
“ cepted) his punishment is as acute as
“ even malice could wish it.

“ To fill up the measure of my afflic-
“ tions, I am informed that the blow which
“ has robbed my soul of its dearest hope,
“ struck at your life—that even in the
“ wildness of delirium your curses pursue
“ me, and you are ready to sink into the
“ grave with unabated hatred.—If return-
“ ing recollection should ever enable you to
“ read, or hear, these genuine dictates of
“ a breaking heart, do it, madam, I con-
“ jure you, the late justice of an acquittal.
“ By the spotless spirit of the dear lost an-
“ gel my fatal love deprived you of, hear,
“ pity—if possible, forgive me.—Can you
“ for

“ for a moment believe that I would have
 “ touched a life, dear, precious, to me,
 “ even as to yourself ?

“ The abandoned woman, to whom hea-
 “ ven, as a punishment for all my sins,
 “ united me, discovered by some unknown
 “ means those views I thought impenetra-
 “ ble ; and, foreseeing in their completion
 “ her own disgrace and ruin, she took a
 “ deadly means to save herself from both.
 “ —Already but too familiar with poison,
 “ and with death, she found, among the
 “ maids attending on my dear lost love,
 “ one base enough to aid her in translating
 “ an angel too early to the skies. To say,
 “ that I hate, detest, and shun the execra-
 “ ble monster, is surely needless—I even
 “ resign her to your justice, nor do I wish
 “ to shelter myself from it, if you still
 “ think me guilty.

“ The last words of an expiring saint
 “ are not more ardent, more sincere than
 “ those I now utter.—Oh ! strive, then to
 “ live, madam, nor let my agonized soul
 “ have the additional misfortune of short-
 “ ening

“ ening your days, and lingering under
 “ your curse !”——

Alas, of what importance are these late convictions ? When a ball has gone through the heart, we are incapable of heeding the quarter it comes from.——

I could not however refuse credence to this letter, and, accusing myself of having hitherto perhaps wanted candour towards the author, I acquitted myself to him, by affording him my forgiveness.

Nature, ever shrinking from dissolution, is easily recalled to a lingering suffering ; but the exhausted soul no more can recover its powers. The activity which once supported mine was gone for ever.——

The venerable divine I have mentioned still watched over me, and by the holiest consolations contended with the apathy into which I was sinking.—But who could heal a heart broken by so many sorrows ?—That it *was* broken alone could console me. Destined to turn my dim eyes around this vast globe without
 2 finding

finding one object on which they could rest, De Vere led them towards heaven; he bade me remember that my treasure was only removed, not taken wholly from me; and that every passing day brought me nearer to recovering it.

For the execrable woman who had, to the ruin of her own soul, murdered the only hope of mine, I ventured not to imagine a punishment.—I dared not trust myself with so dangerous a wish—No, I consigned her to the God she had offended, and he has, even in this world, fearfully avenged me.

The pious De Vere shewed, by preserving and restoring my jewels, the equity of his nature, and I made him such acknowledgments as must flatter his heart, and establish his fortune. As soon as I thought myself equal to the journey, I resolved to retire to France, that I might at least expire in peace, and besought him to accompany me.—Not able without ingratitude immediately to quit his patron, he comforted me with the
hopes

hopes of soon partaking my voluntary exile.

How unworthy the man who won the innocent heart of my translated angel ever was of it, I had soon another convincing proof. Because I resisted the impulses of despair—because I listened to the dictates of virtue and religion, and deigned to live out the days appointed by the Almighty, his narrow soul began to believe mine susceptible of human consolation; he dared to intrude upon me in the name of the King, late offers of acknowledgment, distinction, fortune—Heavens! how could either imagine that I would owe aught to those I must alike look down upon?—The very idea had well nigh disarranged my feeble faculties, and destroyed the religious composure of my grief. It however convinced me that no opposition would be made to my quitting the prison in which I left, alas, all worth enclosing.—I launched therefore once more into the immense world, unknown—unendeared, and willing to be so.

My fever returned on my landing in France with the most mortal symptoms. —Ah ! can I fail here to commemorate the second angel heaven sent to my assistance ? The arrival of the Ambassador in his way toward England, though at first an inconvenience, in so narrow an asylum as an inn, eventually prolonged my days. His dear and lovely daughter was informed of my state—she indulged the sublime impulse of humanity, which led her towards the bed, where lay a forlorn wretch who appeared ready to draw her last breath in silent affliction. She summoned her noble father's physician, whose skill relieved one it could not save.—She even deigned to outstay the Ambassador ; and, by a glorious principle known only to superior natures, began to love the wretch she succoured. A virtue so exemplary almost reconciled me to the world I am shortly to quit.—Sweet Adelaide, when in this faint portrait you survey yourself, sigh for those decaying powers which cannot render it more striking.

That my decline has been prolonged till this narrative is concluded I do not regret ; and by compliance I have evinc'd my sense of your friendship ;—I have now only to die.—Yet, alas, it is with regret I present to your youthful eyes so melancholy a chart of my voyage through life.—Suffer it not to damp your hopes, but rather let it blunt your sense of misfortune : for have I not said already, that consummate misery has a moral use, in teaching the repiner at little evils to be juster to his God and himself ?——Glorious though inscrutable are all his ways, and, short as my time now is, he has suffered me to see his righteous retribution. Condemnation, infamy, and solitude, are henceforth the portion of Somerset and his execrable Countess.—A similar crime, long buried in oblivion, has been proved upon them, without my having once disturbed the sacred ashes of my Mary. An act so atrocious has broke the tie which bound De Vere to the Earl, and I every day expect him. I struggle to retain my last breath till I can give it up in his presence, assured
that

that his superior soul will prepare my frail one for a long hereafter, and decently dispose of the mortal frame I soon must leave behind me.

Dear and lovely friend, you are now in England.—Already perhaps your feet have trod lightly over those spots where my happiness withered.—Ah ! if sensibility should lead you more thoughtfully to retrace them, check every painful emotion, by recollecting that I shall then be past the power of suffering.—Yet when your noble father re-conducts you to the home you was born to embellish, grant a little to the weakness of mortality, and linger once more on the spot where we met : the pious De Vere will there attend your coming.——Accept from his hand the casket I bequeathe, and suffer him to lead you to the nameless grave where he shall have interred my ashes : drop on it a few of those holy tears with which virtue consecrates misfortune ; then raise your eyes with those of your venerable conductor, and in a better world look for

MATILDA.











